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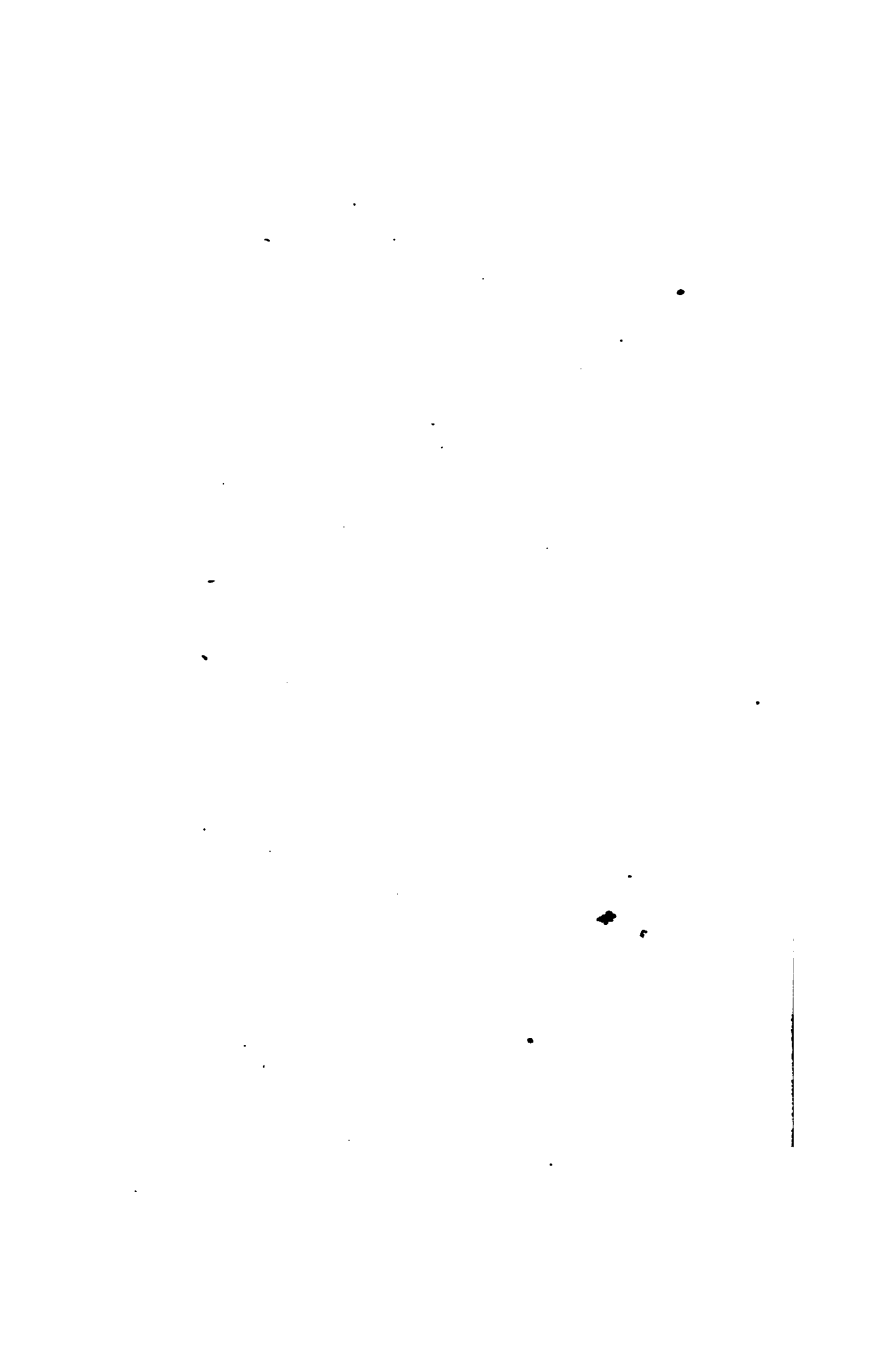


49. 1599.











King James the First receiving the *Szcourum Raurum*, or Royal Mirror of the Parishes
of England.—(See Preface.)

SPECULUM REGIUM,

OR

PASTORAL INCIDENTS :

A UNITED CONTRIBUTION TO THE PASTORATE

AND THEIR CHARGE.

BY BENJAMIN SLACK,

WESLEYAN MINISTER.

"But *his bow* abode in strength."
Genesis, xlix.

"Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung,
Whose fire was kindled at the prophet's lamp,
The time of rest, the promised Sabbath comes !

.

For he whose car the winds are, and the clouds
The dust that waits upon his sultry march,
When *sin hath moved him*, and his wrath is hot,
Shall visit earth in mercy ;

.

And what his storms have blasted and defaced,
For man's revolt, shall with a *smile* replace."
COWPER.



43

LONDON :
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.
G. WILLIAMS, WOLVERHAMPTON.

1849.

PREFACE.

*The title of this work requires a word of explanation. James the First, than whom no English Sovereign fulfilled the part of an earthly Head of the Church more assiduously (we cannot always say wisely,) was desirous of having the religious state of the nation placed before him, and required the Clergy to furnish him with a statistical view of their respective parishes. It was to exhibit the number of attendants upon public worship, and of communicants at the Lord's table, and other particulars. The entire collection, was denominated "*Speculum Regium*," or a Royal Mirror. Few things, of an ecclesiastical nature, could have more laudably occupied the attention of that "Divine among Kings."*

It was this royal enquiry which suggested to that excellent prelate, the late Bishop of Chester, (now Archbishop of Canterbury,) the propriety of requiring every candidate for Holy Orders, to produce a "*Speculum Regium*" of the parish or district in which he had served the year of his Deaconship. This document was to exhibit the names of the householders, the number in each family, the proportion of attendants at the public services of the Church and the Lord's Supper, &c. These returns were not designed so much to inform the Bishop of the existing state of religion in any particular parish or district, as to ensure the candidate's personal acquaintance with his flock, and afford a *pledge of his future pastoral diligence.*



With much diffidence we submit that, *mutatis mutandis*, a "mirror" of this description might be advantageously prepared by probationers for the Wesleyan Ministry, and presented annually at the district meetings. It would supply a test of pastoral character, of kindred importance with that of intellectual advancement, furnished by *the Lists of Books* read during each year. An effective stimulus to *pastoral enterprise* might at the same time be received by others, beside probationers, by means of a faithful examination, from year to year, on this increasingly important question.

INTRODUCTION.

The object of this publication is to describe and revive "*Pastoral Visitation*." It seeks "church extension" by the only available method, not so fully employed now as formerly. Never, probably, was the power of the pulpit to be rated higher than at the present moment; nor were the lives of the clergy of all denominations ever, we believe, more generally irreproachable. *Still, true religion cannot be said to be popular.* The "*holy waters*" require to "*issue out from under the threshold of THE HOUSE,*" or sanctuary; and they are to be "*measured*" again and again, until they shall be "*RISEN: —waters to swim in, a river that cannot be passed*"

over ! and it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, SHALL LIVE !" (See Ezekiel, xlvii. 1st to 9th verses.)

How precious are the *very terms* of one of the earliest promises—"IN THEE *shall* ALL FAMILIES of the earth be blessed !" (Gen. xii, 32) This thrice happy domiciliation of Christianity is to be hoped for, in great part, from the introduction of her ministers within the domestic pale. If it be true, indeed, that "every Englishman's house is his castle," then must ministers of the gospel enter that castle with "*the banner of love,*" to be afterwards placed, by "*willing*" hands, upon its lofty turret, or its lowly roof.

If, however, so chivalrous an enterprise be in contemplation, ministers must be "*good soldiers of Jesus Christ,*" indeed. And they shall be *crowned* at last, if they "*strive lawfully,*" or according to the rules of the war ;—whether they altogether succeed in their object, or *not*. The attempt is to be urged less

as a concession to the people (a most dubious phrase!) than as a service to the cause of Christ. (2 Tim. ii, 3, 5.)

The great *normal* argument of the apostle—
“Therefore I endure ALL THINGS for the elect’s sake, that they may also obtain salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory: (2 Tim. ii, 10) when adapted to every minister’s *varied* toils, will certainly point not more to the gathering of the flock out of the wilderness, than to its future defence, guidance, and sustentation.

It is true that the resources of individual pastors for the discharge of their “*high vocation*,” are much over-rated by many of “*our people*,” as well as *others*; nothing being more common than for as much work of a pastoral nature to be desired, as if there were *no other duties* pertaining to the ministerial office. Indeed, the result of twenty years’ experience has assured the writer, that *the laity* need much information on these points; and especially that many of our “*best friends*” require to make a

more cheerful sacrifice of *large portions* of their pastor's time, in order that he may have more to devote to others whose need and claim are, in the abstract, quite as great. Nor ought "members of society" to forget "mere hearers," who are often in yet more *extreme* need of a pastor's advice and prayers.

As the saved and unsaved are frequently found under the same roof, pastoral visitation is admirably adapted to the discovery and conviction of the latter; even as it was said of old, "*I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees : that say in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.*" (Zeph. i, 12.)

As the sentiments of this little work relate to a somewhat "*vexed question*," the form of "INCIDENTS" has been adopted, as one which may render it more acceptable to the *general reader*.

B. S.

Darlaston, Nov. 17, 1849.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE OFFICE OF PASTORAL VISITATION DEFINED.

“ When they shall be reminded of so clear and great a duty, and excited to the consideration of it, and see, with us, the feasibility of it, in a good measure; when it is done by common consent, no doubt they will universally take it up, and gladly concur with us in so blessed a work. For they are the servants of the same God, as regardful of their flocks, as conscientious as we, as sensible of the interest of Christ, as compassionate to men’s souls, and as self-denying and ready to do or suffer for such excellent ends.”—*Baxter’s Reformed Pastor*.

It is needful to *define* every thing, at present, the age being pre-eminently eclectic and discriminative. This arises, partly, from the increased division of society into classes, and still more from the im-

mense variety of pursuits and topics connected with the multifarious life of, perhaps, the most busy and buoyant nation of modern times. With less restlessness than our continental neighbours, who seem "*given to change*, and almost, if not quite, as "*many inventions*" as our far younger American rivals, we yet seem more diversified than either in the forms and topics of our existence, whether viewed in relation to commerce, politics, literature, taste, or RELIGION.

In *the last*, and unspeakably most important of the whole, viz. *Religion*, we are becoming more avowedly *utilitarian* every year. *The national establishment* has risen more, during the last twenty years, than any, or it may be *all* the sects (*popery included*) that have been cast out of her pale, or have arrayed themselves against her authority. We venture to ascribe this, instrumentally, to *the intellect* which has wrought in her "high places," her colleges and her councils, and which has concocted *new* measures or revived *old* ones, adapted to the keen senses of a religious people, and shewing her up as (after all) England's Church, as well as the Church of England.

It is not chiefly the number of new churches erected both cheaply and quickly, and consecrated in "*almost no time*;" nor National (?) Schools, with Gothic fronts, "*put up*" as the precursors of a "*higher*

dispensation ;" that have added so many more silvery and golden hues to the already fair and dazzling "*religion of our forefathers*"—"BY LAW ESTABLISHED:" but far, far more, than all these attempts at externalism,—the bishops, and clergy, and pious gentry, and (not least) in some instances, ostentatious, or really religious, *matrons*, have raised, or contributed, funds, for the multiplication of PASTORS (properly so called); whose reverend forms have been visible all the week, and moving, too, *among* the people, and with a *serious demeanour*, imitating HIM WHO "WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD."

This is, doubtless, the "*master-piece*" of the Church of England. Puseyite propensities may be a kind of epidemic, arising from over-heated enthusiasm among the clergy, and aggravated by the still more noxious gases of worldly fashion, or remaining superstition among the laity, whether LORDS or *serfs*. But *men* were wanted, and were forthcoming; and if even called, or "vamped up" from other parties, their "fire-new honours" were the more likely to serve THE OBJECT of augmenting their zeal for "Mother Church." Especially, when they possessed a knowledge of the plan of salvation by faith in a crucified Saviour, they became the best of all agents, or "decoys;" and when, with a fluency unknown to senior and more learned lips, they could pray without book!—nay! preach extempore!!!—

they were likely to become men of superior mark to any of the sectaries. But by *visiting* the people, they became at once notorious *in families*, and with the younger branches of our money-ocracy and their dependants ; and they have become the favourite “*quotations*” in matters of spiritual business, for reviving the (doubtless) primitive and apostolic, plan, of preaching Christ “*from house to house*,” adding, however, it must be confessed, the *less* apostolic, and infinitely less melodious, notes (borrowed from the bird of spring) of—“*the church ! the church !*”

If many of the above class become bold and fierce enemies to dissent, and especially to the “*amphibious*” Methodists, it is the less to be wondered at, as most of them are in their novitiate, and waiting for promotion. *Fas est ab hoste doceri.** Undoubtedly many, both of the maturer clergy, and of the rising *pastorate*, of the Establishment, are sincerely endeavouring to labour in their high vocation, and are looking to the Spirit of God for success ; and to all *such*, let both “*honour*” and “*tribute*” be rendered ; and let them be “*esteemed highly in love for their work's sake*.” If, however, they have, principally, reproduced certain of *our* “*ancient rules*,” and, by dint of numbers, and “*on advice*,” are working by them to admiration, then ought we not to disdain to be provoked to a pure jealousy. *On this*,

* It is lawful to be taught by an enemy.

and on every account, the Wesleyan body may be expected to rise with the improved state of things, which, more than all others, they have helped in past years to promote or revive; and it may surely be looked for, that our now veteran party will hold an honourable and leading commission still, in assisting to usher in (what is so urgently demanded) a yet vastly higher order of events, such as "*the promise of the Father*" assures us is yet to come!

Dissent, whether Congregationalist or Presbyterian, has, doubtless, more orthodoxy than *the High Church* faction, and (with certain sad exceptions) quite as much as *the immoderates* of the order registered as "Evangelical." In defining the pastorate, it may, moreover, be due to this particular sphere to confess that the institutions and ordinances of the several dissenting communities are, to a great and highly favourable extent *popular*, so as to introduce the religious element somewhat plentifully into *society*; and, by mingling the "*salt*" of divine things and offices among the "*troubled waters*" of lay or secular life, to help to compose and "*heal*" them. Still, for want

Whether or not the entire body of believers constituting the Church of England at present shall be "sealed" with the error of "baptismal regeneration," must depend upon the judicial deliverance of his Grace of Canterbury, on an appeal now pending between parties engaged in fierce contention in the diocese of Exeter. If this should be the case, (which God forbid!) we may look for another "Disruption," and a "Free Church" of England.

want of central power, and prescriptive plans for the direct propagation of religion, there is less of that honest, straight-forward, zeal for the salvation of others, among even the more earnest of these worthy religionists, than were to be wished; and less, far less, than the doctrines which they hold, and "*the promises*" of the great Head of the Church which they believe, would unquestionably authorise and inspire. The brilliant quality of expansiveness appears to run short in these descendants of *the Puritan worthies*, the larger moiety of that moral elixir having possibly been carried away by "*the Pilgrim Fathers*;" than whom none could be more enterprising, since "*the disciples*," who at the "*first great persecution were scattered abroad*."—(Acts viii. 1.)

Sincere admirers, as we are, of the talent, and devout imitators of the piety of the more prominent ministers and members of the churches composing the voluntary, or anti-establishment, section; and critical *only* upon systems of discipline, and *fitness* for *action* against the common foe; we would merely demur to their *perfect* adaptation to those aggressive movements of the church upon the world which we *all* desire, and for which, it may be said, "*the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now*."

THE WESLEYANS, like their founder, claim an intermediate position; but being neither entrenched

in *court favour* and privilege, nor armed with the natural force of a regular "*opposition*," we are liable to fail of every distinguishing feature, and might be shorn of all the *ordinary* motives to *human* action; and "*if there should come A FALLING AWAY*," we might even disappear in name as fast as we should decay in piety. "*A peculiar people*" we doubtless are; but whether (like some others) we are to be such in eccentricity rather than excellence, and are to prove "*the heaviness*" of that section of the church whom we regard as our "*mother*," or "*the choice one of her that bare (us)*," must, we apprehend, (UNDER GOD) principally hinge upon a faithful, or *unfaithful*—an evergreen, or a withered, *pastorate*; for no adage has met with a more invariable verification, than that so often quoted on this topic,—*Like pastor, like people.*"

Had it not been for our educational establishments, which have recently become so much more prominent, it might be predicated, that we should, even now, have been found sustaining symptoms of *declension*, in the severer sense of the term. Unlike Moses, of whom it is said, (Deut. xxxiv. 7.) that "*when he was an hundred and twenty years old, his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*," we, at a sooner period, and calculating from the age of corporate churches, as yet, but in middle life, might have *seemed*, at least, to be dying off,—yea, hastening

to the tomb! Any religious people in *this* country whose "returns" for several years in succession, exhibit a decrease, are at once put to the proof, that they are passing through some unusually trying process; or, it *must follow*, that they have been losing their hold upon the people; since the latter rapidly *increase*, while the former *decrease*. Forbid it, gracious heaven! that the followers of Wesley, through whose instrumentality tens of thousands of "*living stones*" became "*children of Abraham*," should, for *any year to come*, cease to make *proselytes from among the Gentiles*;" or, yet redder shame! that with our country's growth, we should be *actually waning*! "*But beloved! we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation*," (Heb. vi. 9.)

"*Is there not a cause*," however, for our serious numerical decline in 1847-8? And may not the seed of the disease (whatever it might be) yet lurk in "*the hidden man of the heart*" of our beloved community? Who can SOUND a people, numbering at the last Conference † nearly 350,000 in Great Britain only? How ascertain *the tone* of incorporated societies, whose state varies, not only at different times of the day, but at different points of observation?

Regrets in this matter are valueless, except so far as they may induce future caution, and an improved line of action ; just as it were worse than useless, for one, who was becoming convalescent, to brood over his weakened nerves, when he might spring towards the future, with a hope and resolution, that may, of themselves, help to dissipate his langour, and be a potent means of preventing his further misery and sinking.

It will have been already perceived that the object of these lines is, not to compliment, but (if the high honour can be allowed) to advantage, the "United Societies," or at least some small portion of them ; together with a few of the probationers, not yet received into our ministry, or the still less advanced candidates for the office, in whom "*a zeal according to knowledge,*" may be "*already kindling.*" We, therefore, hesitate not to say, that we neither want "*another Gospel, which is not another,*" nor to "*remove the ancient landmarks,*" by either a more stringent, or more liberal constitution. We have, moreover, "*objects*" in abundance ; and "*affairs*" too many. Yet, we do lack something of the aggressive and chivalrous valour of the past ; and appear to be *moved*, too often and too much, by the agitating changes of the *Itinerancy*, producing in some cases a mere *galvanic* stirring of

certain muscles, in lieu of that conscious and thrilling vitality, which *cannot sit still*, but claims for itself extensive spheres of action, and (like the scion of some renowned military sire) languishes for fields of glory not yet trodden, and, even in sleep, restless, dreams of laurels which may be the growth of other climes, and of distant summers.

“*And did He not MAKE ONE?*” that is any one individual believer, each truly converted and spiritual church,—“the whole family in heaven and on earth?” “*Yet had He THE RESIDUE OF THE SPIRIT? And wherefore ONE?* That he might seek a godly seed,” (or succession.) “*Therefore TAKE HEED TO YOUR SPIRIT!*” (Malachi ii. 15.)

If ever there were a voice from “the Chief Shepherd” to all who have, or may have, the care of His flock on earth, and “*the cure of souls*” in general, it is that of the last clause of this remarkable quotation from the truly evangelical prophecy of him, who was the “last link” in the former dispensation.

“*Take heed to your spirit.*” Not only the outward conduct of “*professed*” ministers especially, whether it be lax or pure, unrighteous or equitable, selfish or charitable; but their “*spirit*,” whether it be abrupt or amiable; “*evil affected towards the brethren*,” or tender of their reputation and happiness; bigoted or catholic; meek or fierce; zealous or inert; *must*

have an obvious influence upon their *success*. But we apprehend the deep oracle of the prophet referred to universal adaptation for usefulness by which *we* ought to be distinguished, above all other men and Christians,—the scheming head, the valiant heart, the enterprising soul, as much as “*the tongue of the learned* ;”—“*the spirit of wisdom*,” to “*win souls*,” and “*keep the vineyard*” of our Lord ; pre-eminently, the “*unction*,” or “*anointing oil, upon the head*” of every sent servant of Christ and His Church ;—“*the mantle*” of the ascended Elijah, upon each of his sons and successors, together with “*a double portion of His spirit*.” (2 Kings ii. 9.)

The “*sweet singer*” of our Israel has embodied the idea, with all his wonted felicity, where he ventures to *predict* :—

“ The virtue of Thy grace
A large increase shall give,
And MULTIPLY the faithful race
Who to Thy glory live :”

and then, he teaches both pastors and people to *implore*,—

“ Now then the ceaseless shower
Of gospel blessings send,
AND LET THE SOUL CONVERTING POWER
THY MINISTERS ATTEND.”—*C. Wesley.*

It is a singular assistance to preachers and *pastors* of the present day, in connexion with such large portions of British Christendom, that the high

Calvinist theory should have so nearly forsaken both the pulpit and the college ; so that there may now take place an *honest* and generous rivalry, among the several (strictly orthodox) denominations, in our respective spheres of action ; and we may *all* be found striving to “ *become all things to ALL MEN, if by any means we may save SOME,* ”—not in any eclectic sense of the last word at all, but in that of “ *casting the net into the sea ; for (we) are fishers,* ” fishers of *men* as such ; any one, or any ten thousand of whom, may be saved, as surely as any or all others. Thank God ! there is much less of that chilling, freezing, dread, of falling in with “ *reprobates,* ” (so *mis-called*) than there formerly was.

General redemption is, indeed, “ *the fire* ” upon the great “ *altar,* ” from which “ *flew one of the seraphims, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar ;* ” and it is now laid upon “ *the mouth* ” of a multitudinous number of humble and prostrate ministers, and *candidates for the office.* (Isaiah, vi. 6, 7). Yet, it may be questioned, whether any one of the “ *great company* ” of those who now “ *publish the word* ” of “ *THE COMMON SALVATION ;* ”—who “ *believe, and therefore preach,* ” this heaven-descended doctrine ; can, consistently, confine himself to any “ *stated* ” congregation, which often consists of “ *a select few* ” only, contrasted with the ever thickening masses of our countrymen.

Without raising the topic of geographical extent, and much less drawing attention to the comparative paucity or frequency of the *preaching appointments*, in *city* or *country* circuits, of the *most laborious* body of ministers of the present day, we propose an exchange of "*Duty*" between the elaborate and ornate literary essay style of preaching, (for which the fancies of certain families among us, if "*not of us*, have, of late, cried out, as the old Roman Emperor's palate is said to have demanded the very unwholesome dish of *peacock's tongues* !) and the same amount in *pastoral visits*. But to rise to a par, they must be really such, and not the desecration of a pastor's time, by desultory gossip ; which, may the "Head of the Church" preserve either the rising or retiring pastorate from inflicting, or having inflicted upon them ! Nothing can meet the case, save a rapid return to the method of one, who "*was not behind the chiefest of the apostles*," and who might have excelled Demosthenes in the style, as he has caused him to be forgotten in the theme, of his discourses, but has "*set his seal*" to the simple and faithful converse of a pastor with his people : saying to the *refined* Ephesians, with inimitable terseness,—"*Ye know——how that I kept back nothing that was PROFITABLE UNTO YOU, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from HOUSE TO HOUSE.*" (Acts, xx. 18, 20.)

If this domiciliary inculcation of the truth would consume too much time, brevity must be insisted upon ; and the *excitement* shall not be more, in the long run, than that which has so oft been loathingly endured by young and unconsecrated ambition, in "consuming the midnight oil." "No oil," (said a late vain and rough politician) "and but few candles have I ever consumed !"* and without taking down more than one half of the sentiment, we may, nevertheless discern its strong common sense ; and venture to assert, that animal spirits which languish in protracted and excessive study, would, undoubtedly be recruited in the vital air ; and the necessity for "a little manual labour, in gardening especially," now "strongly recommended, instead of medicine," could, at once, be obviated, by the salutary stroll of a man of God among the rustic cottagers of his flock, or the middle class in towns, as the case may be ; while, *if time* should press, *the industrious poor* will excuse the sternest economy in that priceless *stuff, which life itself is made of.*

As to the most approved mode of attempting the GREAT DUTY under examination, it might appear presumptuous for a non-official member of *the Conference* to volunteer suggestions to any who may have already enjoyed, or by the leadings of the Star of Providence may, hereafter, be permitted to enjoy,

* Cobbett's Preface to his Entire Works.

the rare privilege of attending courses of "Lectures" from either of our justly esteemed theological tutors, bearing directly upon it. Yet, as to *the former*, we cannot suppose either an exhaustion of the topic, or a disgust at *seeming* repetition; and one of the *latter* might, with advantage, turn his attention for some months, if not *years*, before he can be an accepted candidate for the ministry among us, to this, as well as other *elementary* branches of his future vocation.

"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it?" (Luke, xiv. 28.)

THE BIBLE, then, we hesitate not to affirm, ought to lie open, almost from the moment when a pastor crosses ANY threshold. Nothing will so soon induce an under-toned utterance in the favoured family, of that grave, if not startled, challenge of the prophet, in respect to "the king's messenger,"—"Is not the sound of his Master's feet behind him?" (2 Kings, vi. 32.)

This effected, and the more readily by using a pocket edition of "the best of books," he may begin to enquire of "*his master*," and exert his own best judgment too, as to that particular portion of "the bread of life" which may prove to this or that individual as "*meat in due season*.." Truly, "THOU hast magnified THY WORD *above all THY name*!"

Infinitely more becoming our *spiritual vocation* is the outspread word of truth and reconciliation, than a "peep at the *Times*," or any other ephemeral publication. *Here* is a region, in which even

"A *half* awakened child of man"

can seldom be found to tread otherwise than softly ; and in which "*the least*" of God's servants may enunciate "*wisdom among the perfect.*" *Here*, we may rest assured, is "a treat" for any of our *decided* friends, and the strongest lure for our many *undecided* ones. By this a table is at once spread in the wilderness, and

"Sublimar sweets than nature knew,
Invite the longing taste."

If so "led by the spirit," the liberty of a *living* paraphrase will always be cheerfully conceded to an "accredited" expounder of the scriptures ; yet this must be § "*currente calamo* ;" lest the interview be prolonged to the disparagement of other families. Should, however, a brief remark *in passing* provoke a reciprocity from the Head of the house, or any other enlightened person, the advantage of the visit may be mutual ; and "*the creature*" of social intercourse may be instantly felt by all present to be "*good* indeed, and *to be received with thanksgiving*,

§ With a running, or rapid, read.

for it is sanctified by THE WORD OF GOD and prayer."
(1 Timothy, iv. 4.)

Among the numerous "INCIDENTS" which have occurred to the writer, in the exercise of this part of his sacred calling, few are more fragrant to memory than certain of those impromptu, and generally simple, attempts, of some old sage in humble life, to catch, or communicate, "*the mind of the Spirit*," in "*the Word*." One of these was in his first circuit, viz. Durham, to which he was sent as "a supply," for six months. An old man,* a paralytic, who had been for a long time in "the furnace," and obliged to endure a protracted absence from "*the habitation of (God's) house*," which he so ardently "*loved*;" on hearing that seasonable psalm, the 84th, read to him, "put in a word" respecting the third verse,— "YEA, THE SPARROW HATH FOUND AN HOUSE, AND THE SWALLOW A NEST FOR HERSELF, WHERE SHE MAY LAY HER YOUNG, EVEN THINE ALTARS, O LORD OF HOSTS, MY KING AND MY GOD!" "*Many a time (said he) I have envied the birds of the air, which can fly to thy house whenever they please.*"

Matthew Henry's Commentary on the passage is very lengthy indeed. Among other of its "possible significations," he suggests the following:—"The word for a sparrow signifies any little bird,

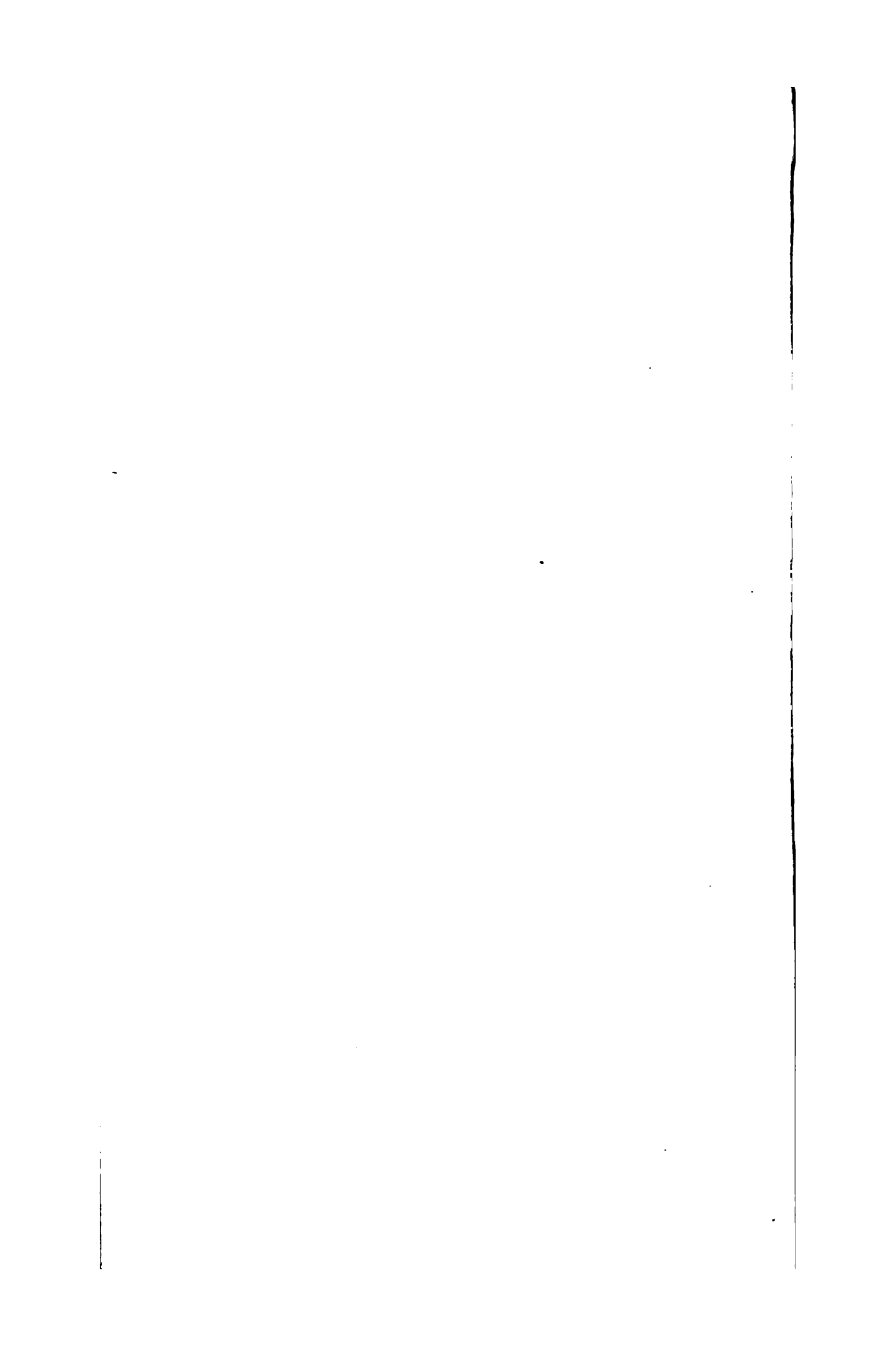
* See Engraving.

and (if I may offer a conjecture), perhaps when, in David's time, music was introduced so much into the sacred service, both vocal and instrumental, that *to complete the harmony*, they had singing birds in cages hung about the courts of the Tabernacle, (for we find the singing of birds taken notice of to the glory of God, Psalm civ, 12), and David envies the happiness of these, and would gladly change places with them."

Dr. A. Clarke adds perplexity to "conjecture;" and with more boldness than we quite enjoy, of which this is not the only, or by any means the most notorious, instance, in his otherwise transcendant Commentary, decides upon placing the whole in a parenthesis. "It is very unlikely (says the learned Doctor) "that sparrows and swallows, or birds of any kind, should be permitted to build their nests, and hatch their young, in or about altars which were kept in a state of *the greatest purity*, and where *perpetual fires* were kept up for the purpose of sacrifice, burning incense, &c. Without altering the text, if the clause be read in a parenthesis, *the absurdity will be avoided, and the sense be good.* 'My heart crieth out for the living God (even the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow *deror*, the ring-dove, a nest for herself, where she may lay her young) for thine altars, O Lord of Hosts.'—'But I have no place either of rest or worship,' understood."



"Yes, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King, and my God."—Psalm lxxxiv. 3.



“The *Chaldee*,” adds the Doctor (and we may say that *it* only adds to the confusion) “translates thus : ‘Even the pigeon hath found a house, and the turtle dove hath a nest, because their young may be offered lawfully upon Thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.’”

For our part, whatever may be thought of our taste or learning, we prefer the more *natural* comment of the poor old man at *Usworth*, to any of those cited from the above high authorities. The difference alleged by the Psalmist appears to be simply that of *volition* or locomotion, which is allowed to inferior members of the creation, while it is mysteriously denied to man in affliction ; and the Psalm being eminently plaintive, there needs no dereliction of piety or patience to be implied, but an *excited mind*, longing and pining for communion with God in connexion with his ordinances. Our own poet has rendered part of a preceding verse into the well-known and beautiful stanza—

“ With strong desire my spirit faints,
To meet the assembly of thy saints.”

C. WESLEY.

Were not this essay addressed to ready thinkers, it might appear tedious thus to start *criticism* by the way ; but we engage that *the Incidents*, which are to follow, shall all be related with a becoming brevity.

It is impossible to conceive how beneficial the interchange of remarks on the Word of God, with *certain* members of his flock, may prove even to an experienced pastor. There is a spiritual, as well as a secular *élite*; and *rank*, arising from a superior "knowledge of divine things," must be *felt* by all. By none ought it to be more willingly acknowledged than by a youthful Apollos *admitted* into the society of an Aquila or Priscilla.

Without affecting a family resemblance to the first of these characters, we may confess that we too were at one time studying elocution, and were fond enough of "pencillings by the way." It was in —31, when stationed at Great B——, in L—— that we became acquainted with an excellent leader of the name of E—— O——; who, after a very consistent career, was called to enter upon an affliction, which was destined soon to take him from "*the evil to come*." On one occasion, our conversation had gathered, with mutual interest, towards the only support of the weak and weary pilgrim, *the word of God*; and it lay on the table, like a common "*staff*," between us. The portion commenced was Psalm xli. Oh! how majestic is the first line, 1. "*God is our refuge and strength*." A mild radiance rose at once into his eyes. We read on, —"*A very present help in trouble*;" to which he responded, "Yes!" 2. "*Therefore, will not we*

fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." He stopped us now, with a shout of triumph! "Oh!" he cried, "That's the independent gentleman!" Never were we more struck with the simple sublime. "*The earth*" was indeed removing, as it is every moment from some one; and thousands of the "independent" (falsely so called) were calling to "*the mountains, cover us! and to the hills, fall on us!*" (Hosea x, 8.); whilst the true believer alone was living, yea, *dying*, independent! Independent, not only of his fellow worms, but of the fickle, airy, "*earth*" herself. "Passing away!" was written upon "this terrestrial;" and when *passed*, the "independent" child of God was shown to have *fallen* into the *everlasting arms*" of his Heavenly Father, which had been ever (as at a little distance) "*round about and underneath*" him!

"Earth's basis shook confirms our hope;
Its cities' fall, but lifts us up,
To meet THEE in the skies!"

C. WESLEY.

It cannot diminish any one's impression of the value of the Bible as the text-book of pastoral converse, to adduce yet another INCIDENT; more especially in these *troubled times*, through which "the United Societies" of Methodism are, once more, called to walk. They were foretold, as it were, by the parallel

events of —33-4 ; at which period the writer was in charge of a large division of the R—— circuit, one of the most agitated in the connexion. James Chadwick was *an old disciple*, and a leader, residing at H—— ; and no man could have been more respected by all sects and parties. He had never been married, but had saved enough to make him comfortable, and was looked up to with filial reverence by all who knew him. Had he been a knight, his armorial bearings might have been—*Sans peur, et sans reproché*.† Such a man, lying on his deathbed, was not likely to be turned away from the pursuit of *perfect love*, by the will-o'-the-wisp of a disappointed and infuriate minority in the Conference. He made inquiries ; and then shook his head, and wept, at the sayings and doings of many of whom he had hoped “ *better things, and things which accompany salvation.* ” His own choice was fixed at once—to “ abide ” where he had been “ called ” near half a century before, and to die as he had lived, breathing the accents of love and peace. Talk of infecting, or even prejudicing, a man of his spiritual discernment by anything in the *Christian Advocate*, or by what had been said at a public meeting !! You might as soon have warped St. Polycarp, had you met him on the way to the amphitheatre, when about to “ *fight with beasts* ”—“ *for the testimony of Jesus,* ” by asking him

† Without fear, and without scandal.

to read over *a copy* of "THE MALICIOUS WORDS" with which that hoary malcontent Diotrepes had been for years, perhaps, "PRATING *against*, even St. John himself.

In the Warrenite opposition, as at present, (and we deeply sorrow to say it,) the merely *human* bonds of Methodism would not always bear the stress which was upon them, during the passing of the hurricane ; but whilst all was tossing and heaving around him, good old James Chadwick, with a few others, even at H——, "*threw out an anchor*," with the mighty cable of "*charity, which is the bond of perfectness*," attached to it, and he was enabled to outride the storm ; and probably the same "test" may hold good during the "fiery trial" now raging in some parts of our beloved connexion.

Musing, one day, on the perils in which a young pastor, only in the sixth year of his itinerancy, might find himself, among the warm spirits evoked by the controversy of some of the people and a few of the preachers, with the Conference, relative to the now generally approved Theological Institution, he rose up from his anxious pillow, and with meekness of wisdom, repeated the apostolic precept, "*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather GIVE PLACE UNTO WRATH !*" 'I always say,' added James, (by way of *gloss*,) '*give place* to it ! let it have *the causeway*.' An excellent hint to young

who may have withstood all the artillery of the pulpit,—we shall appal others, who, if they dared, might probably enough resist us; and we shall strengthen the hands of all the loyal among us, and especially of pious heads of families, and parents who are longing for the conversion of their children.

While on the important topic of PRAYER in families, we deem it right to urge that it should ever be as *appropriate* as possible. It is to be apprehended that we who dispense with all forms of prayer in pastoral visitation, may sometimes lack the effect of certain well arranged, (indeed admirable) “offices, collects for the sick,” &c. prepared by the pens of departed wisdom and piety centuries ago, for the specific purpose. We advocate them not, except as patterns of sentiment, and of a nervous style which may probably endure as long as the language to which they belong. It will be enough if we “*pray in the spirit* :” yet will this certainly lead to a judicious selection of particular cases for representation and pleading at the footstool of mercy. Is not something of the kind intended by the phrase “ALL PRAYER,” (together with) “*supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints* ?” (Eph. vi. 19.)

We may rest assured that there are, in all families, particular cases enough, which press, more or less powerfully upon the heart of each among them, who

may enjoy "an interest" at a throne of grace. Might that group but speak of their "*wants and requests*," at the moment when their pastor is about to kneel in prayer, what might not be predicated as the probable inventory? Here are partners in life, (or if one be absent, they may be "*like-minded*,") with bosoms throbbing in unison, and desirous of receiving the "*wisdom*" which they "*lack*," and which they are allowed to "*ask of God*," together with those brighter smiles of providence and grace which are ever felt to be "*the light in (our) dwellings*." And there are youths, too, grown up "*like olive plants around the table*:"—who shall say what they would have us ask for them? But while the untried future is coming, with its subtle smiles and temptations, we may venture to plead for that which their own hearts cannot but approve,—that the Lord may preserve them in "the slippery path," and

"Uphold them in the doubtful race."

And whilst our faith is kindling, with that of the parents, towards the always radiant promise, we may be led out both by our theme, and by "*the spirit of grace and supplication*," until there shall take place a loud knocking at "*the door*" of their hearts, and one or another of them may "*hear HIS voice and open the door; and I (saith He) will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.*" (Rev. iii. 20.)

Nor should *servants* be forgotten in even a brief visit, and an already burdened *prayer*. If pious, they, too, feel that (with the "*believing*" part of the family) they are "*heirs together of the grace of life*;" or, if careless, they behove to be taught to feel for themselves; which they well may, when they find a full charged cloud of sympathy suddenly risen above them, and dropping divine mercy upon their own heads, and "*not another's*." One of the most gratifying *incidents* of the latter description, just now present to memory, took place in a highly respectable family, residing in M———. The domestic who was made partaker of a blessing, graciously vouchsafed to one of the writer's visits to a family, and exercises at "*the altar*," was growing old for service, being 50 at least. Although not strong, she had always been steady, and was retained from respect for her many good qualities. But she had never experienced a change of heart; and when remembered in prayer, her state was described "*at a venture*," and without any communication previously held about her. The arrow of conviction smote her, and she began to seek salvation with her whole heart, and, ere long, found it; dating her conversion from that PRAYER. This pleasing fruit of his unworthy labours was made known to the pastor, at his next call, by the lady of the establishment, who was herself a "*leader*" in our Society, as was her husband

also ; and arrangements were duly made for the now more than ever esteemed domestic to become a "*fellow citizen with the saints, and of the household of God ;*" (Eph. ii. 19.) and that she might have "*a nail in his holy place*" to "*lighten (her) eyes, and give (her) a little reviving.*" (Ezra ix. 8.) But a few weeks ago, on revisiting the family after an absence of more than three years, she was found still with them, and still "*following on to know the Lord ;*" and the friendly joy of the united heads of the house, on account of a former pastor's brief return, appeared not a little shared in by the worthy domestic, whom, as she had evidently declined in physical strength during the interval, he could scarcely expect ever to see again "*in the flesh.*" He trusts, however, to find her at the last among "*the labourers*" whom he has, by the pastoral visitation of families, instrumentally succeeded in "*hiring*" into his Lord's "*vineyard.*" What ought to be his "*joy,*" if he should be privileged thus to see her, "*when the even (shall have) come, receiving (also) HER PENNY !*" (Matt. xx. 8, 9.)

One of the hints most needful to be *taken*, in order to an edifying discharge of this part of the pastoral office, is, *to avoid common places in prayer.* They are at all times tedious, but more so in professedly extemporaneous exercises than even in written or printed forms,—being worse constructed, and more

benumbing to the ear and heart. And is there not

“Verge and scope enough,”

in any family, to allow of both variety and interest finding their way into a pastor's petitions, yea, and of faith and fervor too? Let them but be suffered to give *a brief* of their case into his hand, and he can both classify the main facts, and enlarge upon the chief point or points, as “*the Spirit*” may give him “*utterance*.” It were wrong to prevent this, by ruling or monopolising the remarks incidental to an interview. Rather let a young pastor especially, wait for the unburdening of the full heart, and observe the oft-ingenuous effort of a weak or tried believer (as it were) to prepare him for the blessed work of intercession, and to obtain the utmost benefit from “*the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man (which) availeth much*.” (James v. 16.)

Unnecessary detail may be generally prevented by an abated interest, or by a word of caution; or if not, must be endured for “*the elect's sake*.” Universal sympathy in our Great High Priest, is that “*pattern of things in the heavens*,” which his servants are to set before them in their intercourse with his tempted people; and it is difficult to say whether Abraham interceding for “*the cities*” of “*the plain*,” (Gen. xviii. 23,—33.) or Elijah continually advocating the extreme case of the widow of Zarephath, (1 Kings, xvii. 10,—16.) were either of them more

in his official duty than the other, or the brighter example to future intercessors, and especially to THE PASTORATE in all ages. *We* both stand "*between the dead and the living*," (Numb. xvi. 48.) and are to "*plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour.*" (Job xvi. 21.)

It may here prove not unedifying to relate a remarkable *answer to PRAYER* (followed by a singular chain of providential events) which was vouchsafed in the case of an apparently *dying infant*. It was at H—, in L—, the same town as that in which our old friend, James Chadwick, (mentioned in the preceding chapter) resided. Few spectacles are more affecting than one of this description; nor does their frequency, in the least, diminish the severity of the stroke to any particular pair, who may be called, like David, (and his partner in sorrow) to "*fast and (go) in, and lay all night*," yea, night and day, (as it were) "*on the earth*," on behalf of a stricken babe, one that is "*very sick*." (2 Sam. xii. 15, 16.) As a reproof to those persons, whether pastors, doctors, or others, (not being the real parents) who undervalue *infant* life, our common Creator and Saviour, having "*called A LITTLE child and set him in the midst of*" his disciples, said,—"*Take heed that ye despise not these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven THEIR ANGELS do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.*" (Matt. xviii. 10.)

The father and mother of the infant in question, James and Ann H——, were both members of our society, and of established piety. They had rather a numerous offspring, the one, now *at the point to die*, being perhaps the seventh or eighth. Calling on the way to an appointment, poor little George lay on his mother's knee, and the father stood with a half forbidden tear in his eye ; while a few kind neighbours were looking on, ready to assist in the last offices. We knelt together, all but the mother, whose brave heart was, more than every one's else, enduring a state of siege, and, at that moment, only knew "*its own bitterness.*" The burden of our petitions related rather to the parents than to the child ; and part of the language employed was,—“ O Lord, if thou shouldst have decided to take this dear infant to thyself, give each of his parents resignation to Thy holy will. But, if thou shouldst design to restore him to health, now *give them a desire for his recovery !* ” The need of asking the latter gift arose from the actual condition of the infant, which was a *convulsed* one, and scarcely admitted of *any* wish, except for its speedy removal to a better world. The time was now spent ; and our next meeting with James H—— was in the street, not until a fortnight afterwards, when he exhibited the usual token of a recent funeral in a family,—*deep crape on his hat !* We were at first unwilling to allude to so

painful a subject ; but, after a few observations of another kind, at length ventured to say, " Well ! the Lord has taken your child to himself ! " " Oh ! no," shouted James, " the child got better ! " " Got better," replied his astonished auditor, " why, how can that be ? and why, then, have you crape on your hat ? " " Oh ! " cried the grateful father, " that's for my wife's mother, who died more than six months since." " *Indeed !*" returned his pastor :—and now, the feelings of *both* may be better conceived than described, while James proceeded to relate that, *while we were at prayer*, both himself and his wife became conscious, *at the same moment, of a desire for the child's recovery*, which they began unitedly to plead for ; and from *that hour* a change, altogether improbable in itself, was visible in him, and he became gradually *quite well !*

Of course, we promised an early repetition of our call ; and in a few days, saw the infant, " gladsome as a bird ;" and the mother delighted enough, as may be supposed ;— with the sole, but *important* exception, that she directed attention to *his eyes*, which, to her acute observation, indicated that *he might not be* " QUITE RIGHT" !!! We started as from a joyous dream, and certainly thought the pupil somewhat more *fixed* than usual ; still there was no appearance of *vacancy*. Instead of attempting to argue a point which was much beyond our

depth, the duty of confiding in Providence was inculcated; and, as *the life* of the infant had been granted *in answer to PRAYER*, it was urged, that the same means ought to be repeated *daily*, in reference to the still more important matter of his perfect *sanity*. Of course, we endeavoured to set an example in this new branch of intercession, and as "*a foolish son* (whether wicked or imbecile) *is THE HEAVINESS of his mother*," we strove, and not in vain, to cast this, her special "*burden, upon the Lord*;" and felt assured that he would "*sustain* (her and) "*never suffer the righteous to be moved*."—(Psalm lv, 22.)

"The Itinerant system" of Wesleyan Methodism produces breaches of a painful character, every two or three years, between pastors and people. But, *here*, a more lamentable "*breach*" was made in "*Zion*," "*like the sea*!" and it may still be asked, "*who can heal thee?*" (Lam. ii. 13.) The evil "*leaven*" of the Anti-Institution party began to *work* in H—— early in —34, shortly after the above *incident*. Unhappily, James H—— (the father of little George) became partly infected by it. Notwithstanding the wise and equitable decisions of the Sheffield Conference, a wide rent was made in several of our societies, and perhaps the widest of all in this very town. The factious "*leaders*" endeavoured, and with too much success, to inflame the minds of "*the common people*,"

and two hundred, at least, was the numerical loss sustained by that one society ! Our respected, and (we still believe) pious, friends, James and his wife, joined "*the Association.*" We were spared the agony of witnessing the actual division, being removed at that Conference to another, and happier, circuit.

Ten years passed after the date of these painful occurrences ; and (being then stationed in one of the Manchester circuits) it was our lot to meet James one morning in Market-street. He was respectably attired ; and at once the look of recognition was given him, and the question asked, " Well, *James !* how are you ?" Perhaps, "the tooth of Time" might have been more active upon his former pastor than upon himself ; or *his* visual organs might be more at fault ; but, turning a full gaze upon the speaker, he said, " You have th'advantage of *me*, sir." The name being given, a convulsive kind of start shook the "stalwart" frame of the worthy man ; and, in another instant, he shouted to a female, who was lingering behind (no other than his wife)—" Nancy ! Nancy !" She stepped up, and with a broad and sunny smile over his features, he dashed out, " Dost t'o know this gentleman ?" She confessed herself at fault : " Why, this is Mester ———." " What !!!" half screamed the woman ;—and with tears beginning to rush from those oft-used fountains, she seized upon a willingly-offered hand of renewed "*fellowship ;*"

and then, bounding several yards along the busy causeway, pointed to a *fine boy*, who was looking in at the window of one of the large depôts of prints and paintings, and demanded, "do yo' see that lad?" "Yes." "Do yo' recollect praying once for a child 'at were dying?" "I do." "THAT'S HIM!"—Judge of our sensations, on beholding one of the most healthy and *intelligent* looking boys "of his inches," who then trod the streets of either Manchester or any other town or city. Yes! he was "*right*" enough, in his *mind* at least, and seemed deep in study, as he quickly moved from pane to pane, and looked,

—— "First on *this* picture! then on *that*."

Not relishing the stare of "the Manchester men" as they moved along to their warehouses, we volunteered a rapid inquiry, as to the particular business which had brought our friends over. The father then spoke: "We are come" (said he) "with that boy, who is DEAF AND DUMB, to get him admitted into the *Deaf and Dumb School*."

"What! and is that fine little fellow *deaf and dumb*?" "He is!" cried the mother. "And has he been able to learn to read yet?" "YES!" proceeded James, "he has, and many things beside. We've give him all th' education we can get *at any school* about Heywood. He can read, and *write*, and *do sums*. He's a *fine scholar*! But we want him to

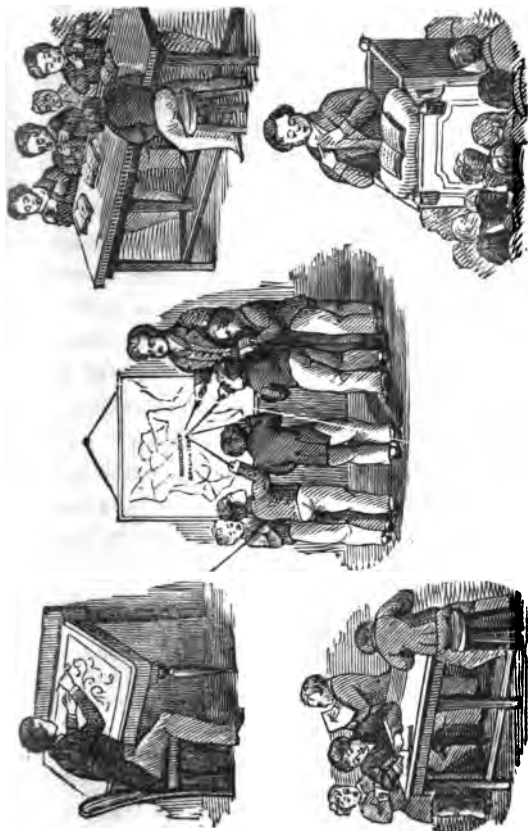
learn all 'at ever he can, and if we can henely get him into this *greeat* school, he may be able to *hern* a good living."

We were, by this time, nearly *dumb* ourselves, pondering the ways of God. But contending with our reverie, the practical inquiry was made, "Have you the means of procuring him admission into the institution?" "Nay," said James, "that's what we want. Do yo' know any of th'subscribers, 'at wo'd give him a vote?" "When is the day of election, James?" "Why! *tomorrow*! and you see he's gooin in eleven! and we donnot want him to loise *another yerr*." We could endure no more; but giving the worthy pair and their observant, and really beautiful, little "deaf-mute," a sincere, though hurried benediction, strode away from a scene which more than threatened to storm whatever nerve we might possess.

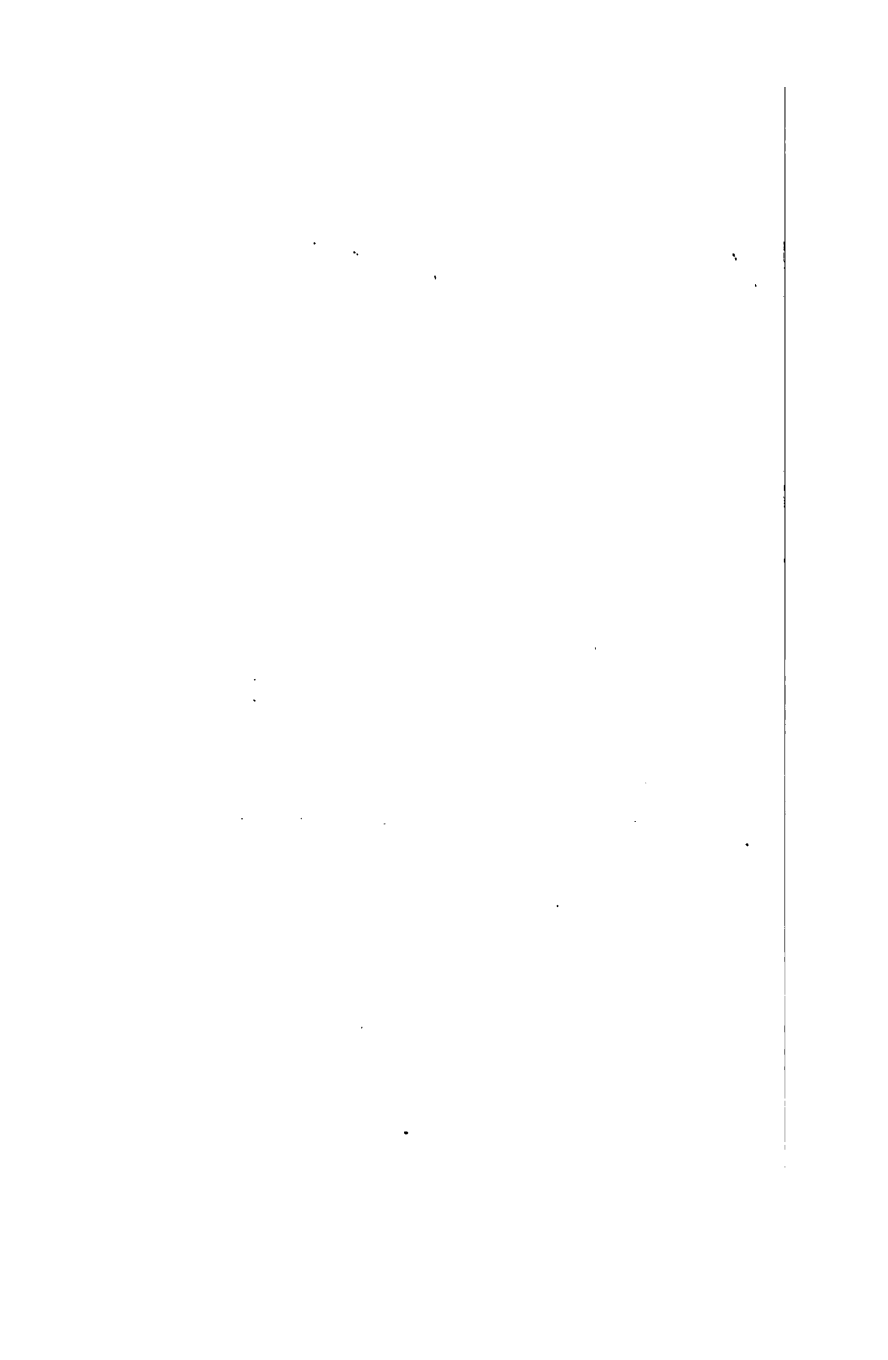
Ponder the next circumstance! In less than five minutes we fell in with a benevolent "Manchester man" on his way to his "place of business;" who, on hearing the story, related for the express purpose of interesting him on behalf of the boy, deeply regretted that he was not himself *a subscriber*; "but," he added, "Mr. —, my partner, *is one*! and I will do all in my power to interest him in the case."

No doubt this was done, and the boy might, or might not, have been admitted *that year*, into this

noble institution, where "every thing" is taught, besides board, &c., being given (with little or no charge in cases of poverty,) if *we* had not encountered, first, the group already described on the *previous* day, and then the gentleman, whose partner could exert personal influence at the meeting of the subscribers. But our "*cup*" was certainly full, on the following Saturday, when, taking up "*the Guardian*," we read a prominent article relative to the election, and saw, sixth or seventh on the list of successful candidates, *the name of our new protegee!* In that institution he probably may yet be found, pursuing his studies, and preparing by the adventitious aid of one of the most patriotic of England's charities, to run a successful course in some high walk of art; and the deaf mute may, possibly, be not only *no burden* to his family, but (as several whom we know to have profited by similar advantages,) even fill a very superior station to that of an operative spinner, which was his father's business; and though still cut off from the ordinary avenues of good and evil, may (as we have been rejoiced to hear there are already *symptoms of* it) become "the flower" of his family, and their "better angel." We have a distant relative of our own, who was trained in the same school, and is an *accomplished* character, and for years was in the



"He hath done all things well; He maketh both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak."
(Mark, vii. 37)



receipt of more than fifty shillings per week in wages for work done as a *designer of patterns*. There is a still greater prodigy in Yorkshire, a deaf mute, who actually *prays in public, and expounds the Scriptures by signs!* and has been the means of “*converting*” several of his fellow deaf mutes, “*from the error of (their) ways.*”

Comparative “innocents” only; they, too, need a change of heart, that they may “*enter into the kingdom of God.*”

Shall our young friend’s Methodism survive his superior education? and shall he be useful among his fellows, scattered, as they are, and without any appropriate means of grace and salvation? Will he have “*seals*” to his ministry? If so, one might sing to the voiceless lyre, which had caused another that was “*deaf to hear,*” and that was “*dumb to speak!*” To such might be applied these elegant stanzas:

“The east wind had whistled for many a day,
Sere and wintry, o’er summer’s domain;
And the sun, muffled up in a dull robe of grey,
Look’d sullenly down on the plain.”

* * *

“If a few virtuous tears, by the merciful shed,
Touch’d its *hardness*, perhaps the good grain
That was sown there and rooted, though long *seeming* dead,
Might shoot up and flourish again.”

of interests, with all, and each of us? Even for rebels, he is the intercessor, and "*day's-man*," negotiating their submission and pardon; the sighs of the penitent, and "*the groaning of the prisoners*," rise and swell not, but to create a returning and protracted echo, from HIS throne and "*mercy-seat*;"—the hopes and fears of every believer vibrate in the boundless region of HIS open and ever-toned bosom; the entire personalty of "the church in the wilderness" is lodged in HIS hands, summed up in "*HIS understanding (which) is infinite*," and is, for ever, "*nigh unto*" him, both by "*day and night!*" Well, then, may we "*hold fast our profession!*" and speedily and joyfully, ought tens of thousands more to take that "*profession*" up! "*For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*" (Heb. iv. 15.)

There can be no doubt that *the sympathy* of Christ, towards us all, should be the motive and pattern of *ours* towards one another; and, by way of eminence among his fellow worms, each pastor of a church and congregation is called in this respect to *represent* the love and care of "*the Chief Shepherd*" towards one and all of them. Would that the succession and generations of Christ's "*Vicars upon earth*," (so miscalled) had been all LIKE HIM, or, even in the least, like him, in their *feelings*;—had sought to be

representatives indeed of the heroic "passion" of
HIS philanthropy, and of

"His boundless charity divine!"

The ancient disgust and grudge of mankind towards the clerical name, are to be attributed chiefly (to say the least) to the almost universal APATHY of "the order," in centuries gone by. But now, we see reverence and gratitude to real pastors of all denominations, *abounding* in proportion to the return they have effected to a primitive, apostolic, and Christ-like SYMPATHY. This was the "*bread cast upon the waters*," at the beginning of the Christian era; which lived, and floated down the troubled stream of dark and intolerant ages; and is now found "*after many days*," as vigorous in principle, and as fertile in growth, as when it was first dropped from the hands of the Apostles, nay, of the Blessed Redeemer himself. Let us cultivate this exotic from "*a delightful land*"—this successive and reproductive grace. More and more shall the popular heart be thereby reclaimed from the coarse and invidious growth of impiety and *disaffection*, and the golden girdle of unity between pastors and people, shall be that "*charity which is the bond of perfectness*."

"Now destroy the envious root!
The *ground* of Nature's feuds remove;
Fill the earth with golden fruit,
With ripe, millennial Love!"

C. WESLEY.

certain to be lost in energy. A lax, wandering style in *prayer*, is much worse than the same *vice* in exhortation; just as a careless stroll into a neighbour's house is more pardonable than the conduct of the notorious "boy Jones," in repeatedly entering the awful palace of our beloved Queen, without an obvious and legitimate errand.

Above all, it is imperative upon every one, who has had entrusted to him "*the gift of PRAYER*," to exercise it with frequency and fervour, in his "*closet*;" for he who prays to his heavenly "*Father in secret*," shall be "*rewarded openly*," in the high and glorious sense of being incomparably better qualified, through his private *wrestling with God*, to appear in every other situation, "*as a Prince*" (*that hath*) "*power with God, and with men, and (hath) prevailed*." (Gen. xxxii. 28.)

There can be little doubt that the patriarch himself "obtained mercy" on this most memorable night of his history. It may not be necessary to *prove* that he had *no* vital piety at any previous period of his life; but he had several gross faults, both of heart and conduct, such as are but too common among those in whom a religious education has not been, as yet, followed by genuine conversion. Here, then, we have this afterwards illustrious successor of his father Isaac, and of Abraham, "the friend of God,"—this "promised seed;" this officially, yea, feder-

ally, "elect," and (*in that sense*) preferred, and "loved" one, until now, apparently unconverted;—certainly, in a low state of grace, if "in grace" at all. But there had arisen a sore personal and family emergency! His brother Esau, whom he had "supplanted," and exasperated, was coming to "meet" him, at the head of "four hundred men!" As to the transaction which had occasioned the rupture, Jacob had not "*mens conscia recti*;"* but rather a guilty conscience, in the sense of knowing and, now more than ever remembering, that he had taken an unfair advantage of his elder brother's *weakness and absence*, at two separate times. "What must (he) do to be saved?" The severest retribution appeared to menace him, and, with respect to his family, in the tenderest part. Oh! Jacob, "thy sin," despite of thy subtlety, hath, at length, "found thee out!" But "man's extremity ever was God's opportunity:" and on that dreadful occasion, after having disposed of his family and property in the most prudent manner the emergency would admit of, and dispatched a message of conciliation and submission to his brother, with *presents* (of the nature of an attempted restitution); then, he "*passed over the ford Jabbok*" by himself, and lodged (not slept) in the open air all night. "And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."—(Gen. xxxii, 24.) Matthew

* A mind assured of its own rectitude.

Henry says, in his paraphrase on the passage,—“To aggravate the trial, God himself seemed to come forth against him as an enemy, to oppose his entrance into the land of promise, and to *dispute the pass* with him.” And what was the event? The prostrate, unarmed, unfaithful, but repenting and pleading sinner, met his Maker and Saviour, or rather was met by him. Let me *meet* with thee, “my God!” and “my father’s God!” under *all* circumstances; for under *none*, can I escape THY omniscient and piercing gaze! Better meet thee quickly,—now! even in “controversy” (though not with an unhumiliated heart) than postpone “the evil day” until “the redemption of (my) soul,” which “IS PRECIOUS!” and efficacious, shall have “ceased for ever!”—(Psalm xlix, 8.) It is known that the sinner prevailed with God. The prophet Hosea says (in chapter xii, 46) “Yea, he had power over the Angel, and prevailed: he wept and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; even the Lord God of Hosts; the Lord is his memorial! *therefore*, turn *thou* to thy God! keep mercy and judgment, and *wait* on thy God continually.”

The sentence against unpardoned sin will hang over the head of a professor of religion especially, as a solemn, yea, fearful, suit, which must “come on,” sooner or later, and in which he is certain of

being "cast." Then, "agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him!" (Matt. v. 25.)

To wrestle with God is to grapple with thy sins ; and He whom thou hast most offended will, ere long, be "*prevailed*" with to remove the ban which has appeared to forbid thy nearer approach to him, either in or private, in company or "alone." Now, in answer to the ever strengthening appeal of thy "praying faith," he shall yield to thy despair, and help thee to conquer not only Satan, but thyself ! The light of his perfections shall be held up to each sinful act of thy life, and corrupt propensity of thy nature, and shall still reveal His essential mercy and his sweet forgiving Love ! At the moment of thy perfect prevalency, he may touch "the hollow of (the) thigh" of thy own strength, and as "*the sun rises*" thou mayest halt upon it. "The sinew" will be found to have "*shrank*" indeed, and thou shalt go halting *there* all thy days. But sunk, once for all, in thy self-confidence, and thy creature trust, thou shalt have "*prevailed*" indeed, and prove the new strength of grace divine ; and thy heart, thy emotions, thy practice, thy type, thy very *name*, shall be changed, even as the fashion of thy countenance, which shall now indicate to all that thou hast access to God, and "*power with*" HIM. *Here* is the appropriate, the much desired, aid of a fine mind which

had undergone the same joyous transition. Just as the beams of divine mercy, of which thou art *no longer* shorn, as was Samson of his strength, are pouring forth upon thy prostrate but enraptured spirit, thou art invited, yea challenged, to sing :—

“’Tis Love! ’TIS LOVE! thou diedst for me,
I hear thy whisper in my heart!
The morning breaks, the shadows flee,
Pure, universal love thou art!
To me, to all thy bowels move,
Thy Nature and thy name is Love!

“My prayer hath power with God: the grace
Unspeakable I now receive;
Through faith I see thee face to face:
I see thee face to face and live!
In vain I have not wept and strove;
Thy Nature and thy Name is Love!”

C. Wesley, p. 138.

This may be clearly identified as *a holy rapture!* nor need we marvel at the enthusiastic preference, yea, homage, extorted in favour of the entire hymn, or poem, called “Wrestling Jacob,” from that (all but) first-rate poet, and exquisite judge of spiritual and devotional poetry, DOCTOR WATTS; where, in noble self-oblivion, he “did not scruple to say that ‘that single poem, *Wrestling Jacob*, was worth all the verses he himself had written!’” §

§ See *Minutes of Conference for 1788*, in which is a specimen of the sententious, and, therefore, nervous, style of the founder of Methodism; together with *his* oblivion of family prestige, in strictly adhering to *brevity*, even in recording the demise of his own illustrious and beloved brother *Charles!*

Then, bring the wreath! although 'tis "sixty years since," and crown, with posthumous honours, this elect Laureate of

"The Church in her militant state:"

and allow the writer of this hymn of hymns to stand forth as the greatest modern favourite of the Heavenly Muses. Rather, tender it to him, that, as a mere instrument, *he* may cast it at his Saviour's feet; and let our bright perceptions of that Saviour's goodness, who gave "such power unto (man)" to embody in verse the sublime joys of salvation, that we might catch and shout them, induce us to take up the theme again and again! "BY HIM, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise continually; that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name." (Heb. xiii. 15.)

It must be a series, or continuity, of these divine manifestations, that is to "anoint" us all "with fresh oil;" and, more than learning or fluency, and more than OFFICE, shall qualify both pastors and their "fellow-helpers to the truth," to conduct the devotions of the people, both in the sanctuary and domestic circle. Nay: but let that new era come, when our supplications and intercessions shall always be baptized in "the joy of the Holy Ghost;" when they shall be purged from the base alloy of formality, arising from the presence of our fellow worms;

or charter of the case? Admitting "the Psalms" to have been composed chiefly for *temple service*, we find in the New Testament alone, sufficient, both in the form of command and permission, as to an extension of this delightful branch of worship into every ramification of society, and into the deepest solitudes; *prudence only*, in this, as well as some other parts of our religious exercises, being left in full power to prescribe, as to *time, place, and degree*. How "exceeding broad" is "the commandment!" and how passing sweet the privilege! conveyed in those words of the Holy Ghost:—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all *wisdom*; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."—(Col. iii, 16.)

But it is time that, in pursuance of the plan of this work, we should introduce another "INCIDENT."

From the many which rush upon memory, the following may be selected, as presenting, perhaps, what might be called an average specimen of the use of *singing*, in connection with the PASTORAL OFFICE.

In 1834-5, the writer was stationed in the B—— circuit, and resided in B——, which, though not a large town, was then, and is now, one of the most respectable and thriving places, that enjoy a share in the manufacturing trade of Lancashire. One

morning there came a message, that a young man "under conviction," wished much to have a visit. Knowing the family, and appreciating "the case," in half an hour the call was obeyed. The young man was found in a state by no means enviable,—in tolerable health, (it is true,) but too dejected to follow his employment. There he sat, in a corner! and for some time before, as well as at that moment, those lamentable strains, composed probably by one of the prophets, when in Babylon, and found in the 102nd Psalm, were truly applicable to his condition:—"My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread."

"By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin." (Psalm cii, 4, 5.)

A brief conversation explained the case. "The spirit of bondage again to fear," had, indeed, been "received" by him: (Rom. viii. 15,) and in a more severe sense even than that, in which the oppressed Job first employed the painful figure, he might have said, "The arrows of the Almighty *are* within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves *in array* against me." (Job vi. 4.)

To change the illustration,—his sins, which had not (so far as his pastor could learn,) been greater than those of others around him, were revealed

before him, like a *fearful* object in the heavens, fixing and compelling his gaze, shaking his nerves, and menacing his reason; for alas! he could not, by either instruction or persuasion, be yet induced to "turn to the strong hold (as) a prisoner of hope," (Zech. ix. 12,) or to look out for "the star of Bethlehem," or any object of comfort to his guilty and despairing soul; albeit, the heavens might be said to be full of them. But he was *not* to remain long in the dark corner of unbelief, into which, under stress of fear, he had ignorantly run, after he had "wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill." (Ezek. xxiv. 6.) Prayer was offered up for him; and then, A VERSE, appropriate to his feelings and wants, given out. Fortunately, his visiter was able to raise the tune; otherwise that part of the effort would have been abortive. It is not now remembered what the lines were; but the effect was almost magical! Say, rather, it was a direct blessing upon the duty performed; which was, to deal out to this famished soul, the bread and water of life, in such a form as might reach the seat of want, and grapple effectually with the despair which was gnawing, like hunger, "the hidden man of the heart." It was *given* to that one verse, to pierce the gloom; to dissipate the fantasies of ignorance and temptation; and to *advise* one who was

"sorrowing after a godly sort," of *the nearness* of his Redeemer.

" 'Tis His the drooping soul to raise,
To rescue all by sin oppressed,
To clothe them with the robes of praise,
And give their weary spirits rest."

C. Wesley.

The "prison doors" once opened, the light entered, and John B— felt his "chains fall off from his hands!" The emotions which followed, although sudden were not unreal; but, like his prototype in the prison of Herod, "he went out, and passed the first and the second ward," (and then) "the iron gate, which opened of his own accord." (Acts, xii, 9, 10.) Never afterwards was this young man known by the writer, who remained more than twelve months subsequently on the circuit, to droop his head in spiritual despondency; and, after uniting himself with the church, he commenced a course of consistency and usefulness, which evinced the reality of the change he had undergone; and on the morning when his *first* pastor left the town with his family, John was at the door of the inn from which the coach started, and, with a tear of gratitude in his eye, attempted to utter his acknowledgments, and the best blessings of his faltering voice and heart. Even yet, that parting interview remains fragrant; and after the lapse of eleven summers,

poor John's tear threatens to draw down a congenial, and not unprofitable, shower from a pair of eyes which seldom weep, except on such occasions. It is even as—

“The former and the latter rain;
The love of God and love of man.”

C. Wesley.

The above was so intimately connected with another INCIDENT, (having, indeed, *led* to it,) the testimony of which is, if possible, still louder in favour of Pastoral Psalmody, that we shall make no apology for proceeding at once to add the latter also; that “out of the mouth of two witnesses every word” we may have to advance on this topic “may be established.”

Being deeply interested in J—— B.'s continued spiritual welfare, and “not ignorant of (Satan's) devices” in regard to infant believers, it was deemed advisable, without the least delay, to exercise his newly acquired graces of love and zeal, in some direct effort, or enterprise, on behalf of the souls of his fellow creatures. He was, therefore, with his own hearty consent, forthwith dispatched to seek a congregation, who were to be assembled in the open air, *at his father's door*, at twelve o'clock that day; being what is significantly called “the noon hour.” It was done; and John and his pastor met again very shortly, in that (to the former at least) pecu-

liarily interesting, and also *trying*, position ; and thus we became early partners in the toils of the spiritual vineyard, and “companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.”

A good congregation soon gathered, as John and his father, with a few others specially engaged “on the spur of the moment,” raised their “tuneful voices” in a court of considerable extent, and near to which, scores of persons were passing and repassing, especially at that period of the day. The first hymn over, we prostrated ourselves in prayer before Him, who himself had so often “taught in the streets” of Jerusalem, and elsewhere, and has ever shown that His presence is not “confined either to time or place,” and especially, that He “dwelleth not,” (exclusively) “in temples made with hands ;” but that, as “Heaven is (His) throne,” so “EARTH,” (yea, every plot and inch of it) “is (His) footstool !” (Acts vii, 48.)

The text selected was (Isaiah xlv, 9,) “Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker ! Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth !”

Brief was the introduction : for the people could scarcely be said to have been then *fixed* ; business or caprice, inducing a somewhat trying movement, ever and anon, at the outskirts, like the rustling of drapery upon a walking figure, or the action of wind upon the front trees of a plantation. Here we

may suggest, for the benefit of our juniors, that lengthy introductions have been recently (?) discovered to be *a bore*, even on Sabbath mornings, and when addressed to the most quiet and studious auditories. Modern pulpit orators are complained of for constructing their discourses on too artificial a plan! It may be so: but "the plans" of almost any "architect," (of public buildings especially) might teach even that "*ladies' preacher*," (the author of much well-known and spirited poetry) that, whilst his *Muse* is more long winded than is quite admired,* the *introductions* to some of his occasional sermons, are perfectly unendurable! We happen to know, that when he preached in M—— some years ago, several parties went out at the close of his introduction, which extended over an hour! We ask what tyro in "plans or designs" of any kind, would have been guilty of such a vile disproportioning of parts to each other; unless, indeed,

* The *titles* of some of this celebrated writer's effusions have been complained of by persons of taste, as being infelicitously antagonised. Instance, "The Omnipresence of the Deity; a Poem:" and "Satan! a Poem!!!" which are his two principal performances. The latter earned him the unjustifiable, and not *godly* cognomen of "Satan M——y," under which he was more than *half-wickedly* lampooned, in a certain regular depôt for the nation's laughter, which we *do not* recommend either our pious young friends, or lukewarm middle-aged ones, to *take*. The above piece of impiety, and irreparable injustice to *a fellow man*, helped to decide us, more than two years ago, to have little, if any thing, to say, about *a thing* that must make "*hits*," be they good, bad, or indifferent.

The latter part of this note is *emphatically intended* as a "United Contribution to the pastorate and their charge."—Vide our title page.

the sermon itself was to be spun out for at least six hours? It might be owing to a (not unnatural) phobia of the same, that the preface proved so moving! We are reminded of the candid admission of a late pulpit oddity, living at the antipodes of all

— “Gentle theologues!”—

who, when he once happened to be drawn out too far in his introduction, exclaimed,—“Bless me! I have made the porch bigger than the house.” *Dictum sapienti* (non nunc)! *sat est*.*

But to our INCIDENT. We had barely secured attention to a few plain, heart-fetched, warnings to every unequal and miserable *competitor* of THE ALMIGHTY, and were hoping to follow our earlier blows with others yet more sure; when, behold! there appeared upon the field, or rather the pavement, (what will the elegant reader think?)—*a rat!* with a terrier in full pursuit! Ignoble pair! We bit our lips in grief, and felt a passing suspicion, that “the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience,” (Eph. ii, 2) might have sent the vermin, as a decoy to the “unthinking part” of our hearers. Another instant;—and this was strengthened by the simultaneous rush of twenty or thirty (male) persons, of

* *A word* to the wise is (not at the present day) sufficient, on *this* subject.

different ages, from "under the word," and their joining in the chase!

Were we to be discomfited? Were John's labours in "the vineyard" within the very "*hour*" in which he had been "*hired*," (Matt. xx, 2.) to be at once blighted, and "a kind of first fruits" thus snatched from his hand and trampled in the mire of sin and folly? Yet more;—were the attentive, and grieved, part of the congregation, to be cut short of the spiritual meat, for which they had willingly sacrificed part of their "dinner hour," and, certain of them, the dinner itself? Not so. Higher rose the preacher's voice in the air, and forth went a loud, (perhaps *harsh*) appeal, to the better principles of the fickle part of his hearers, who had so "vilely cast away their shields," in the very hour of battle, and were in full retreat before him. "Come back!" he shouted;—you see how little a thing will draw away the B——y people from the Word of God! A rat cannot run across the street, but they must follow it; although they thereby leave a sermon behind! "Woe! to the man that (thus) striveth with his Maker!"

It was successful: nearly the whole returned at once, overcome by shame, conscience, and last (not least) by a kind of *amor patriæ*.*

* A love (or respect for the character) of their (*own*) country!

The discourse now went on without further interruption ; and evidently favoured by the silent, yet forceful, law of re-action. Circumscribed, however, as by the laws of nature herself, we were not long in effecting a close ; nor, under the circumstances of an open air service at so peculiar an hour, was the sermon less appropriate, or worse arranged for usefulness, because it happened to consist almost entirely of "application." Of course, our young convert was pleased : and so were the rest of the family, to have had one of the Itinerant Ministers to preach at their own door ; and more than that, to look upon the altered appearance of their beloved relative since

"A change came o'er him :"

and he had been "brought out of darkness," and began to emerge "into marvellous light !" The charm of Charles Wesley's lyre was yet potent in his "soul," which, "or ever he was aware, made him like the chariots of Amminadib !" (Cant. vi, 12.)

Wandering again (or rather, meandering) from our INCIDENT, we are carried down the stream half a century below the date of the above humble "service," to "a grand charge" made by our heroic founder upon "the enemy," who was then deeply entrenched in the strong hold of the nation's heart and ways. One morning, (we have reason to believe on Tuesday, July 13th, 1784), Mr.

Wesley took his stand on a stone, or horseblock, in front of "the Thorn" Inn, in B——y, not a stone's throw from the court where the out-door service, just described, took place. When he was in the midst of his discourse, there came up a young couple, who had just been "united" at the parish church, and whose attention, despite of their own peculiar circumstances, was instantly arrested by the sight of that "Man, (say rather) ANGEL, OF GOD!" As they listened to his "silver trumpet," which never gave "an uncertain sound," conviction seized the young man especially; and being of well-knit mind, as well as body, his determination was soon taken; which was, "As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. xxiv, 15.) The effect of the Word upon them both was fully evinced, when, in the course of the day, sobriety and deep thoughtfulness reigned over their nuptial festivities, and peremptory steps were taken *not* to have *the fiddler to lead the dance*, which was then quite customary.

"Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti:
Tempus abire TIBI est!"*

In the better absence of that godless functionary, the friendly party who did assemble that evening, were "serious without sadness,—cheerful without

* Enough hast *thou* play'd,—enough hast *thou* eaten and drank!
It is time for *THEM* to give place!

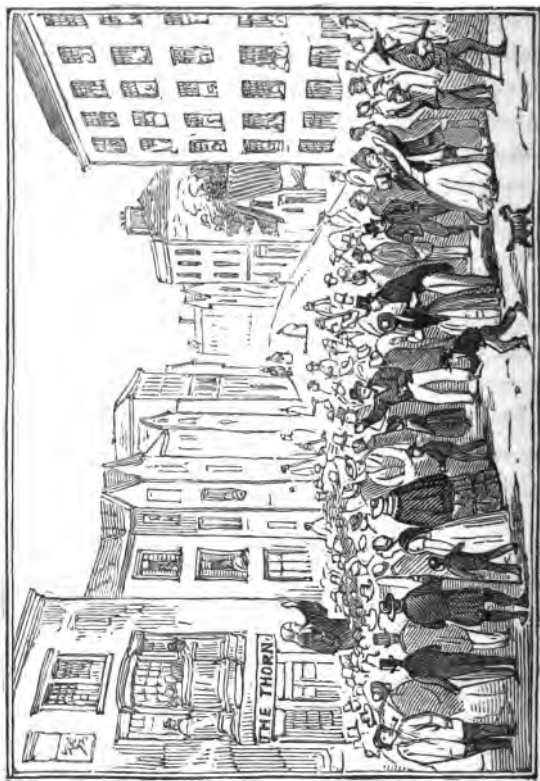
gaiety ;" as became those who had on that doubly memorable day, entered into the most solemn of all human engagements, and, moreover, resolved "henceforth to offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord." (2 Kings v, 17.) *The chief guest at this wedding was the Saviour* ; even as he formerly condescended to be present at the marriage of Cana, in Galilee, at which he wrought his first, or "beginning of miracles, and manifested forth his glory." (John ii, 1, 11.) Those young people afterwards became an honour to their Christian profession ; and, "Blessed (they were) in (their) basket and (their) store ;" in strict and happy accordance with the terms of the promise. (Deut. xxviii, 5.) In 1834, both were still living ; and with many of their children, and children's children, were in high repute for piety and usefulness. Since then, both have "finished (their) course," and doubtless have joined Wesley, and myriads of the other "followers" of his "faith and patience," in the Paradise of God : And they will be finally found at that eternal banquet, concerning which it is said, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white : for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said unto me, write, Blessed are they which are

called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Rev. xix, 7-9.)

Of these thrice happy results of that *one* open-air attack on Satan's kingdom, it is more than probable that Mr. Wesley himself might never be apprised, while he remained on the earth ; just as the arrow discharged from "the bow," drawn "at a venture, smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness," (1 Kings, xxii. 34.) without its being known, perhaps, to the "certain man," whose achievement it was, under the direction of a retributive, sin-avenging, Providence. To resort to a more gentle figure : there may be even yet vibrating in heaven, the true EPITHALIU* of Christ and *these* "sinners that repented," at the call of His word, which was then made "plain upon tables, that he might run that read it." § (Habakuk ii. 2.) Who shall say that it shall not be reiterated as often as the still increasing results of *these* conversions may be yet developed above? Nor may celestial minstrels disdain to employ, on such a topic, that sweet *pastoral psalmody* of the evangelical Prophet :—"Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters ; that send forth *thither* the feet of the ox and the ass." (Isaiah, xxxii. 20.)

* A nuptial song.

§ We esteem it an honor to our little publication, in attempting to extend over a wider space, the knowledge of the above interesting facts, to connect with them the venerated name of the late *William Hopwood, Esq.*



"He began to bawl amain, till his wife ran to him, and literally stopped his noise. She seized him with one hand, and clapped the other upon his mouth, so that he could not get 'ut one word!"

—(Wesley's Works)

After a due consideration of the date, and other circumstances, we were not a little delighted to find in the immortal "Journal," a record of what we have every reason to believe to have been the same visit to B——y, and the self-same sermon, under which our two friends received their first decided impressions from that "good spirit," whose operations are as the wind which "bloweth where it listeth." It is as follows :

"July 1784: Tuesday, 13. I went to Burnley, a place which had been tried for many years, but without effect. It seems the time was now come. High and low, rich and poor, now flocked together from all quarters, and all were eager to hear, except one man, who was the *Town Crier*! He began to bawl amain, till his wife ran to him, and literally stopped his noise. She seized him with one hand, and *clapped the other upon his mouth*, so that he could not get out one word! God then began a work which, I am persuaded, will not soon come to an end." — *Wesley's Works*, p. 284.

The contemplative amateur of Wesley's "life and labours," who has gone with us into the famous reminiscence, which it has been our good fortune to fall in with, of one more instance of the success of his open-air preaching, may require to be reminded that he left one of the unworthiest of Wesley's successors in the act of descending from the chair on which he had stood to "preach the Word," a little, perhaps, "out of season," at the door of J. B.'s father's house.

Scarcely had he wiped away the perspiration which was flowing from his forehead, or even breathed, when there rushed into the house a female, who had been in the congregation, and earnestly desired him to go at once and visit another female,—one of her neighbours,—who was in *dying circumstances*. By no means unwilling to attend to this new call of duty, although he had not yet dined, the “spent” state of the preacher, nevertheless, demanded a brief space; during which he submitted to this apparent proxy of a suffering friend the merely expletive intercedent: “Then she particularly wishes to see me.” Posed by an *exactness* which she had not anticipated, the worthy and tender-hearted woman candidly admitted that she had “not even once thought” of proposing such a question to the very party, who, most of all, behoved to have been consulted! Our sense of propriety did not, however, forsake us in deference to the scarcely prudent hurry of another, and that a stranger, or nearly so.* It was promptly, and, most reasonably, required that this preliminary

* The young pastor may be respectfully cautioned against an implicit acceptance of calls upon his services, on behalf of the sick or others, not authorised by the principal parties, or any member of their families, but volunteered (however sincerely) by some inconsiderate neighbour or acquaintance. “Hereby hangs” another INCIDENT; which, (in the proper place) we may relate. Although as punctilious as we well could be, at the time, we were placed in trying circumstances, owing to the non-concurrence of a sick person in a visit that had been urged by several neighbours.

should be observed, were it only on the ground of courtesy; (for we are commanded to "be courteous;") (1 Peter, iii. 8.) and we promised the good woman to remain where we were until her return. No difficulty was anticipated, as the Wesleyans were in good odour in the town, except with a small clique, (of the High Church party;) and *they* had no encouragement from the worthy Rector, than whom a more liberal-hearted clergyman could scarcely be found. What then was the surprise of every one,—what the chagrin of the zealous, but now seemingly officious, applicant for our aid,—and what the "gracious horror" of our new convert, John,—to find that the sick person firmly declined any assistance of ours? not on the ground of religious indifference at all, but, because "she would prefer the clergyman;" meaning not the Rector, but a certain young scion of the establishment, who had not been long in the town, and had, already, made himself rather notorious for "high church" assumptions. Now, we always saw it our duty to respect opinion, and still more, conscience, in all their variations and deviations; so that we were not at all ruffled by the refusal of our unworthy aid, so long as a wish was expressed to have the services of another minister. Any professional *penchant* which we might have felt towards "the case," gave way in

a moment, to a feeling of honour, without (we can truly say) any conscious mingling of resentment, self-conceit, or even denominational preference. In a more than usually satisfied, and thankful, frame of mind, on account of the good (apparently) vouchsafed to the efforts of the morning, it was all but impossible for anything, short of absolute rudeness, to have disturbed that catholicity of spirit which we held, and yet hold, to be no equivocal evidence that a man, and especially a minister of the Gospel, really has "the mind of Christ." It was, therefore, cheerfully conceded, and even strongly urged, that the young clergyman, whose services were in request, should, without loss of time, be sent for. Never can we forget the look returned to this proposal, by the still anxious, nay, more than ever, anxious, self-appointed, applicant (indeed, persevering, and pleading, advocate) for *our own services*, on behalf of her dying, and yet unpardoned, neighbour. Oh! how affecting is it to witness a pure, disinterested, yearning love for *one* soul in particular! It goes far beyond a general love for the souls of our fellow creatures, in the aggregate; just as a focus exceeds, in intensity, the same rays of light in a state of divergence.

Besides her principal argument (and one which, in many instances, is not capable of receiving a satis-

factory answer) that such a minister might be an instrument of good by "preaching CHRIST" to a dying person, while another (not mentioning names) might do harm by withholding HIM; (alas! alas! that there should be so many now-a-days, in ENGLAND, of the latter *school*!) our importunate friend had just ascertained, that the reverend brother so much preferred was actually from home, having gone to hear the Bishop! Even then, we were inexorable to her pleadings. Ocular demonstration that a fellow-creature was at the point of death might have justified the neglect of all etiquette; but we indulged a hope that the case might be not quite so bad as our friend apprehended; and our finalé was, that we could do nothing more at present; but that, having to go into the country to preach in the evening, we would, on our return, call at the house of the applicant, and if the Clergyman should not have arrived, we might then deem it quite right to make a direct overture to "supply (his) lack of service."

The appointment for the evening was at W——n, not quite three miles from B——y; formerly so wicked a spot as to have been called "Worst-town," under which discreditable appellation it is found legally "described" in many old "writings," yet extant. So proverbial for wickedness were the inhabitants,

that a saying was invented for them by some one, who had wit enough, no doubt, and influence too in securing circulation for his satirical hits; viz. that "when the great 'adversary of God and man,' paid a visit to that country, he seldom stopped there at all; except that, just hovering above the village, he glutted himself with the idea of its abandoned condition, and closing his eyes, exclaimed, '*It is all my own!*' He then flew rapidly forward 'to work in the hearts' of others of his children, not so deeply sunk in ignorance and depravity, and, therefore, in greater need of his infernal presence." No doubt, the repetition of this may have provoked the coarse laughter of hundreds of sinners in the place itself, (whether natives or others) when surrounding the bowl, and stimulating each other still to "go on in" (their mutual) "trespasses;" and probably a well-grounded apprehension of being found at all sympathetic with such bygone impieties, may prevent our own readers from so much as *smiling* over so sad a legend! Alas! for the forefathers of our present English peasantry, and yet more, alas! alas! for some of the yeomanry, and squirearchy, and (we wish we could faithfully except them) worst of all! (because of their opportunities and position) some members of *the sacred profession* itself; concerning whom, when the Wesleys and Whitfield rose up,

as lights in a benighted land and age,* those words of St. Peter might have been justly predicated :—
 “ Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not !” (2 Pet. ii, 3.)
 Can we forbear to apply to this alarming state of national wickedness and *perversion*, that other note, yea, “ certain sound,” of a coming “ visitation,” found in the premonitions of even the “ rapt” Isaiah himself?—“ But they also have erred through *wine*, and through *strong drink* are out of the way ; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink, they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.” (Isaiah xxviii. 7, 8.)

It was no difficult task to persuade our young friend J. B., to accompany his Pastor to W——n,

* “ It was unquestionably the most unevangelical period that had ever occurred in this country, since the Reformation was completed in the reign of Elizabeth. Infidelity was extensively prevalent, both in the form of downright blasphemy, and of philosophical speculation. Of this no doubt can be entertained, when it is remembered that the pernicious and wicked writings of Hobbes, Island, Blount, Collins, Mandeville, Shaftesbury, Tindal, Morgan, Woolston, and Chubb, were then in full circulation ; and that the higher and more influential classes of society were especially corrupted by their poison. The evil was aggravated by the appearance, about the middle of the century, of the infidel speculations of Bolingbroke. By many it was regarded as a settled point that Christianity was a fable, which they were justified in holding up to public reprobation and scorn, for the manner in which it had restrained the appetites and passions of mankind.”—*Jackson's Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism.*

on that memorable evening of his "natal day;" for "as (a) new born babe, (he) desired the sincere milk of the word, that (he) might grow thereby," (since he had certainly) "*tasted* that the Lord (was) gracious." (1 Peter ii. 2, 3.)

Not that he could as yet, (perhaps) boldly affirm the fact of his own salvation, or succeed in trampling down, at once, every wanton doubt, which attempted to invade his comfort. But he had escaped from the dungeon of "DESPAIR;" and (like the liberated pilgrims) had gone with "speed, and come to the King's high way." Ere many days he, too, could (as it were) "erect a pillar," to warn other "pilgrims against passing over" the "stile" leading to "Doubting Castle;" and "*this done*" sing as follows:

"Out of the way (I) went, and then (I) found
What 'twas to tread upon forbidden ground;
And let them that come after have a care
Lest heedlessness makes them as we to fare:
Lest they for trespassing, his prisoners are,
Whose castle's DOUBTING, and whose name's DESPAIR."

Bunyan.

The congregation was good for the place and hour, and the little society earnest and united. A new chapel was just then in prospect; and when once you can present an "object" like that fairly before any people, who have been long "straitened" for room, the interest is sure to be intense, and "faith

and love " have been often known, under such propitious circumstances, to "grow exceedingly." Nor are the Ministers of a circuit the less popular, because, as it is said, they are so very favourable towards "our place." Few men have done so much for the cause of God as Wesleyan Ministers, in conjunction with "the principal friends" of themselves and the people, by advocating *in every prudent form* "Chapel Extension" in their respective circuits; whether at the places proposed to be so favoured with additional privileges, or, "in their places," at "Quarter Days."

Having introduced the reader to this once notorious village, or hamlet, under circumstances so very unfavourable to its reputation, it is mere justice to state that, years before our time, a marked improvement had taken place in its morals and piety. One of the neatest rural churches had been recently erected, and was (as we understood), by no means thin of worshippers. The rector there, also, was a pious and worthy man, (albeit rich, and not *exactly* "resident.") The curate too was highly spoken of; and Church-of-Englandism was there "worthy of all honour." It will never be forgotten by us, how the battle of humanity and morality was fought by the reverend Rector, while we were in the neighbourhood, in the form of a valiant protest against the annual "Races" which had been held on part of the

estate which he then possessed, in "the palmy days" of the former proprietor. Nothing could induce this patriotic and noble-minded clergyman to allow the continuance of such a moral nuisance in any place over which he had control; and if another landowner had been equally conscientious, B——y would at that auspicious period have been delivered from one of the greatest annual curses which can afflict any town or neighbourhood. Alas! that the too late repentance of Protestantism, in that matter, should have merely served to develop the incurable apostacy of Popery! For several months the contest ran high: but "the publicans," forsooth! were "in favour of the races!" Who ever doubted that? A systematised remonstrance against a threatened infringement of the "ancient rights" of "the people" to be amused, at the risk of impoverishment here, and perdition hereafter, was "got up;" and being strongly favoured by "the powers that (were)" in the next township, it was, in the issue, arranged by the law of the strongest, that the races should be simply removed to a part of *that* estate, which was done; and now was beheld a revival of this vulgar and detestable sport, at a juncture which appeared to promise its extinction. That all this should have been perpetrated under the direct auspices of Popery, can scarcely be wondered at, and ought to be taken as another proof

that "THE MAN OF SIN" will never promote the holiness of the people, in any latitude of the earth, where HE may be found in the possession of POWER.

It was Popery on the throne of these realms, in the person of the Second Charles (restrained but a little by the oaths of "the Restoration,") which enforced upon a moral and reluctant nation the truly infamous "Book of Sports!"

Let equal censure, however, be fearlessly levelled against any *Protestant gentry* who, for the maintenance of "*the Races*," "the same day were made friends" with the Popish party, with which "before they were at enmity."

The fatal time arrived; and aloof as the moral, and godly, were resolved to keep, from *the course* itself, *the town*, after all, was, for a season, the headquarters of Belial! Passing hastily along the pavement opposite to one of the principal inns, we, ourselves, were fated to see preparations making to "fight a main of cocks!" Nay, we saw the miserable birds themselves borne to the pit in white bags, which, in a few minutes, were to be dyed with the blood of some of them. Involuntarily, we held our nose, as the men, (say fiends!) who bore them, passed us, with their brutalised features, their ashy complexions, and their spirituous, and fiery, "*breaths*!"

Not half so reminiscent, however, of *our own* horror at this "triumphing of the wicked," as con-

vinced that many of the youth of twelve years ago, now the men and women of that abused district, might date their first plunge into the vortex of sin and folly from those, and succeeding "races;"—and ready to shriek, in lamentable echoes of the agonised utterances of the hundreds of souls, who may have since been *lost for ever!* in consequence of the revival of that abomination* in B——y; we hesitate not to apply to this fearful crisis in the destinies of that

* It may add to the ordinary disgust which every pious and humane person must entertain towards these still prevalent blots upon our Christian country's name, to rehearse what we heard, more than twenty times, in the love-feasts at B——y, from the deeply ashamed, and tremulous mouth of the reformed and converted sinner himself; viz.: that once, when he was immersed in the cruel and vindictive sport of cock-fighting, for which his native town was at that time notorious, his own bird was evidently losing the game; when, unable to restrain his brutal rage, he laid hold of it, and in one minute, actually *bit off the poor creature's head with his teeth!* Marked indeed! by all, had been "the gracious change" which this once violent wretch had undergone; and of which he had given satisfactory evidence by a new and holy life, for nearly thirty years, when we knew him. Too old to follow his occupation (which was that of a collier) he was obliged to eke out a livelihood by small, but honest services, in the way of carrying coals, &c. When once confined to his poor little cottage by affliction, a benevolent lady made the writer the willing almoner of her bounty to the poor old man. The amount of the gift was a shilling; and as soon as he received it, without *blanching* as some might have done at the thought of his independence, (of which he had a creditable share) having fallen under him, and much less reserving his acknowledgements for the close of our visit, and then *dispatching them*, he forthwith turned over from his low chair with both knees upon the floor, (an evolution the more easily made on account of the exceeding smallness of his stature) and poured forth his sincere and abundant thanksgiving to his Heavenly Father, together with his grateful and devout prayers for the kind lady, who had "*sent to (his) necessity.*" His name was Nicholas. Poor old Nicky! I wonder if he yet survive.

part of the manufacturing district, the well-merited epithets of "the Man of Uz," too gloomily applied to the period of his own nativity:—"Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it. As for that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months. Lo! let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein!" (Job iii, 4-7.)

Returning to W——n, (no longer Worst-town) it must be a triumph to every lover of his Saviour, and his species, to contemplate the new church aforesaid, with its goodly attendance of worshippers, and looking as though it had been erected over part of "the ruins" of Satan's once vaunted kingdom.

"These temples of his grace,
How beautiful they stand!
The honours of our native place,
And bulwarks of our land.

C. Wesley.

Wesleyan Methodism was, however, very considerably older as a local institution, or establishment in the village; and to it as a system, ordained and approved by the Great Head of the Church, must be awarded the meed of having fought "the battles of the Lord" here, when all other denominations (the Church of England included) were slumbering.

Their "record is on high, and (their) work is with (their) God," who were in the habit of holding prayer meetings at this then abandoned place, walking several miles for the purpose ; and their's, too, of the circuit-town, who long made themselves responsible for the rent of a room, for preaching and a Sabbath school. A "society" of fifteen or twenty persons had been gathered out of "the world ;" and several of them, "we bear record to their power, and beyond their power, were willing of themselves," to contribute towards the erection of a chapel. It was our lot, in company with the late Mr. H—— and two Sabbath-school teachers, to wait upon the wealthy, but somewhat eccentric, owner of the township, for the purpose of obtaining a site. After the steward, (to whose politeness we were much indebted) had pointed out to the squire the exact place, on a map of the estate which lay before him, the latter very liberally acceded to our request, and fixed the nominal rent of five shillings per annum !! to be paid for the ground, on a lease of 999 years. The "joy" of the venerable man who was the principal party in making the application, (the same already described as a convert of Mr. Wesley's on the morning of his marriage,) was just then "*full*," and his "cup running over." Notwithstanding the disparity of circumstances between himself and the Lord of the manor, (who might be about his own

age,) and maugre the opposite creed which he professed, Mr. H. exclaimed, with tears of gratitude, " Bless the Lord ! there have been many souls that have gone safe to Heaven, even from *the old place !*" The squire was half fixed by the assertion, and probably believed it ; but, in his own peculiar and brief manner, merely replied,—“ Very well ! very well ! very well !” and making a most courteous bow to us all, left the hall. As for Mr. H., it might be said, “ HE went on his way rejoicing !”

It might be ten o'clock in the evening, when, after preaching and holding a prayer meeting at the place, about whose ancient, and even recent, ungodliness, as contrasted with its present superior status in morals, piety, and happiness, we have ventured to linger (we hope not unacceptably) through so many lines of our little publication, the writer and his companion, J. B——, reached B——y. Bidding our young brother a sincere good night, and taking due care to drop a word at parting respecting the need of continual prayer and watchfulness, it may be supposed that preaching at noon in the street, and in the evening at the village, (walking and “talking by the way” included,) we should have been more than ready to retire for the night ; but a sacred engagement had been made to call at the house next to that in which lay the dying female,

respecting whose "end," as it was then rapidly approaching, every reader will have, doubtless, felt a deep and solemn interest. A cheerful countenance met us at our entering our friend's habitation, and we were apprised, "first thing," that the young clergyman had "never been near." Sending in our name to the sick abode, the feeling of the party and her family, in this "day (and night) of trouble," was found to have undergone a great alteration in favour of our seeing her; and not only full leave, but even an earnest invitation, was quickly accorded, and brought to us with "zealous haste." Another minute,—and the *vice*-pastor was in the chamber of the dying! She was a woman in middle years; and whilst there was no charge against her of immorality, or even (for some time at least) neglect of the ordinances of God's house, she was still without pardon,—“reproved of sin,” but not yet “of righteousness,”—not yet “born of the spirit,” and, therefore, in the terms of gospel truth and law, incapable of “entering the kingdom of God.” (John, iii, 5.) By far the most hopeful part of the case was the severe, yea, extreme, distress, into which a *divine* sense of her state as a sinner had thrown her,—that “godly sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of.” (2 Cor. vii, 10.) “Blessed are they who (thus) mourn, FOR THEY SHALL BE

COMFORTED!" (Matt. v, 4.) Satisfied as to the legitimate, or rather evangelical, right of this true penitent to be forthwith led to the Saviour, we addressed ourselves, without the least sensation of weariness, (we can truly say with alacrity,) to our delightful, and pre-eminently *urgent*, task.

"Lifting up (our) eyes unto the hills from whence cometh (our) help," we demanded a BIBLE! The portion to which we were directed, was one which, after that memorable night, became a greater favourite with us than ever. Often, in parallel circumstances, have we read and commented upon it; and *never* without profit both to reader and hearer. It was the blessed parable of the two DEBTORS! Who that enters into its sweetness, and gazes on its sublimity, can help repeating, in his thoughts, that consummate expression, so often quoted in prayer?—"As is Thy Majesty, so is Thy Mercy!" Well does it behove to be introduced to every one who may be "seeking mercy." Let it perfume our page, as it does its own hallowed and time-loved place in the sacred volume. To "turn to it" is like opening the box of "ointment" of which it speaks, and inhaling anew its imperishable odours. —"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty; and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of

them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, thy sins are forgiven." (Luke, vii, 41—48.) Our part was now truly Wesleyan; yet we only followed Wesley, as it was his daily habit and *system* to "follow Christ." (1 Cor. xi, 1.) We particularly admire that paragraph in his immortal exordium to the "Rules of the Society:"—"In the latter part of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I should spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to 'flee from the wrath to come,' which they saw continually hanging over their heads."

The point, now, was to convince our penitent that she was (herself) *an object of her Saviour's love*. The task, however arduous, was at least "orthodox." Hear the former part of the "Absolution or Remission," "pronounced by" (the minister) "alone, standing, the people still kneeling," every Sabbath morning, in the whole of the British churches, connected with the Church of England; and in many other equally evangelical sanctuaries, where "the prayers," unabridged, are read:—"Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live; and hath given power, and commandment, to his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, *being penitent*, the Absolution and Remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his Holy Gospel."

"*The power*" assumed from the terms of this "Absolution," by the "fire-new," but decidedly heterodox, school of Anglicans, (whether in public or private) we repudiate. We confess, also, the wisdom of our founder, in omitting it from his "Sunday service," without, however, any mark or brand upon it, such as he has justly affixed upon "some sentences in the office of Baptism, and for the Burial of the Dead."

Our question is, what scriptural power has a Christian Minister (or other visiter of the sick and dying especially) to endeavour to "reprove," or convince, of "righteousness" or pardon, those who, in his utmost judgment, "do truly repent, and unfeignedly believe (the) Holy Gospel?"

The individual penitent must not only desire salvation, but, believing the "holy" and blessed "Gospel," must be expecting the blessing, *i. e.* a divine evidence of pardon. Such might be the precise state, (but under an inferior dispensation) of him, who in that evidently penitential Psalm, (cxx, 6,) is heard exclaiming :—"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning." Such a character requires, and ought to take, comfort; yea, "a strong consolation, (having) fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb. vi, 18-19.) Without reasoning like Simon, and others of "those that sat at meat," we firmly believe "the thoughts" of the Saviour, towards ALL SUCH, to be "thoughts of peace and not of evil:" (Jer. xxviii, 11.) Of peace! yea, of love! personal, "reconciling" LOVE!

“ Light in *thy* light, oh ! may I see,
 Thy grace and mercy *prove* !
 Revived, and cheer'd, and bless'd by thee,
 The God of pardoning love.”

C. WESLEY.

Let no “ Lover of souls,” then, be delicate in pressing an agonising sinner towards the bosom of an agonising Saviour ! for truly, that Saviour shall answer for himself, in words, and looks, of pardoning LOVE.”

“ Nor shall (he) to the work thou enterprisest
 Be found wanting, but afford thee *equal* aid.”

Milton.

In hundreds of cases the writer, together with his co-itinerant, and local brethren, in addition to the leaders and prayer-leaders, of our active religious community,* are called in “ at the eleventh hour !” How momentous *the duty* assigned us on such an occasion ! being neither more nor less than, to bring a soul to Christ ! else must that soul perish without him !

Depending on no arm of flesh, we courageously asserted the love of Christ (by which we were ourself constrained) to this very person and “ not another.” Blessed be God it was not in vain ! “ The Comforter” was there, as promised to the

* There is a perfect prestige on the *talent*, and *hearts*, of the Wesleyan body, for the visitation of the sick, and dying, in all parts of the kingdom.

expectant and rejoicing Son, who declared, "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." (John xvi, 14.) After reading and explaining the precious portion of Scripture, already described, prayer was offered for its immediate application even "as a nail in a sure place," to the extreme case in hand. Not long, but "fervent," and (may we venture to say?) "effectual," was that prayer. "The scales were now, indeed! beginning to fall from "the eyes" of her "understanding;" and conscious of no ordinary manifestation of "the power of God" being "present to heal" her wounded spirit, we passed from the exercise of prayer, (properly so called) to that of prayer arranged for several voices, in the form of A VERSE, dictated by consecrated genius, for the special behoof of any such eventful and glorious crisis. It was this :—

" Now! if thy gracious will it be,
Even now! my sins remove;
And set my soul at liberty,
By thy victorious love!"

C. Wesley.

The dying woman's own voice, which had responded to our earnest and believing petitions on her behalf, caught up, with even strengthened utterance, the two former lines of this verse. But no sooner were the two latter given out, than she broke

forth into thanksgiving and praise. She even shouted—"Bless the Lord! bless the Lord! He has! He has!

"—Set my soul at liberty!"

Glory! glory! glory! hallelujah!"

"Hallelujah!" we now responded: "Hallelujah!" echoed several voices in the room; among which, we could not fail to recognise that of her husband, (Churchman though he was), and that too of the indefatigable individual who, like another importunate widow, had pleaded for our attendance upon her neighbour, even as though it had been for her "own soul." "By faith," too, we were able to realise the songs and harps of the angelic choir, who are ever ready to celebrate all such trophies of redeeming grace; yea—

" ————— With a shout,
Loud as from numbers without number; sweet
As from blest voices uttering joy: Heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions: lowly reverent
Towards either throne* they bow, and to the ground,
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold."

(*Paradise Lost.*)

It was, by this time, hastening towards the "noon of night." We, therefore, took a joyful farewell of this new "seal" of our unworthy ministry—this

* That of the Almighty and his co-equal Son,

abundant "fruit" of prompt action in PASTORAL SERVICE,—“in season, out of season;” and especially in connexion with the almost parallel INCIDENT of the forenoon of the same day,—this conclusive “commendation” of a select, yet prompt and frequent, use of PSALMODY, as one important element of *the office* under consideration.

The gratulations of the happy creature, and those of “her neighbours and friends,” who might have been “called together” expressly, to “rejoice with” her, because she had “found the piece which (she) had lost,” (Luke xv, 9.) were accompanied (which indeed *any* pastor may rest assured of in *any and all* cases) with “a general invitation” and entreaty, for us to visit her again, as soon, and as often, as possible. Remembering always, however, that she professed to belong to another flock, we might have felt delicate in engaging to repeat our attentions frequently; lest the professional and fraternal claims of her proper pastor might have even appeared to be violated. But we had a strong presentiment that we should see her “face no more” in the flesh. A promise to call again in the course of the following day was, therefore, cheerfully given; but, at eight o’clock in the morning, she “departed to be with Christ, which is far better!” (Phil. i, 23.)

Who that may honour these “Incidents” with a consecutive perusal, can forbear uniting with one

who regards himself as "less than the least," in attempting to appreciate perhaps even more highly and earnestly than before, the essential MERCY of God, and "the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." (Eph. ii, 7.)

"Unfathomably deep *our* treasure runs
 In golden veins, thro' all Eternity!
 Ages, and ages, and succeeding still
 New ages, when this phantom of an hour,
 Which courts, each night, dull slumber, for repair,
 Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise,
 And fly thro' infinite!
 Where thou, not master of A MOMENT here,
 Frail as the flow'r, and fleeting as the gale,
 May'st boast a whole ETERNITY, enrich'd
 With all a kind Omnipotence can pour!
 Since Adam fell, no mortal, uninspir'd,
 Has ever yet conceived, or ever shall,
 How kind is GOD, how great (if good) is man."

"THE CONSOLATION:" *Night the Ninth.*

There is, doubtless, much blame due to those who procrastinate until "the eleventh hour!" that grand work, to accomplish which is our chief errand into the present world; and so emphatically the "one thing needful," that it has been vividly denominated

"My sole concern! my single care!"

Yet, how much guilt of this description may not be participated in by *the Church*, as implied in the plea of the very latest of the labourers,—“Because no

man hath hired us!" In lieu, then, of an unchivalrous, sympathy with those who "murmured against the goodman of the house," let us remember that our own salvation has been, hitherto all "of grace." We hope, indeed, to be found "complete," but it can only be "IN HIM;" and even that evangelically stipulated "recompense of reward" to which we "have respect," (or, as it might be read, *have an eye!*) will inevitably sustain the character of a largess. Nor can our most zealous and protracted toils in "the vineyard," ever establish even the shadow of a personal claim, to the very lowest seat at the heavenly banquet!

Let us, then, see the *imprimatur** of the Great "Householder" upon the system of going out at all the hours of man's probationary day, to find those who are yet "idle." When called to attend upon a dying sinner, let us emulate the enterprising alacrity of Him whose

— "mercy flies apace!"

and let us not fail to allow more than a little, in some instances, for the unconverted character, and therefore "unskilfulness in the word of righteousness," of some of the professed teachers of "the common people," and of their oftentimes bigoted superiors.

* The Broad Seal.

Never, even for one hesitating moment, let us be straitened in the bowels of our compassion : for that one "leaning towards Calvinism" and inactivity, may imperil the final salvation of *another's soul*. As to ourselves, if we could even be saved at all, with the blood of souls upon the skirts of our garments, we might, nevertheless, anticipate, on the very front of a tarnished crown, as it were, a dull and hollow socket, from which some brilliant jewel has for ever fallen ! "For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever !" (Psal. xlix, 3.)

Launch we, then, the life-boat of our compassion and zeal ! and at the first cry of an adventurous and careless sinner in danger of perishing (as of "a man overboard!!!") let us slip a slightly knotted cable, and ply our oars, faster than those who merely "strive for the mastery." A larger "deficit" than is common, of sectarian tenacity and party heat, shall not fail to be forgiven us both by God and man. Mean-time tens, yea hundreds, of those to whom we ministered in their extremity, and who blessed us as they expired, shall beam forth as a remote constellation in the sky, challenging our continued faith and courage, and having written upon it that divine testimonial, and certificate of endless honours, "He that winneth souls is wise !" (Prov. xi, 30.)

How delightfully *mellowed* ! are those sentiments of the venerable Joseph Sutcliffe, (perhaps the oldest

commentator upon the entire scriptures now living,) in his reflections at the end of his comment on the 3rd of Ephesians: "Christian perfection" (he says) "especially consists in knowing 'the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.' All men have admired the beauty and sublimity of this passage. Here is the perfection of wisdom attained, not by human teaching, but by divine experience. The 'breadth' of Christ's love is omnipotence, encircling all mankind with mercy. The 'length' is eternity, ever flowing with grace and goodness to man. The 'height' of His love is the sublime majesty, elevating the victorious to thrones in heaven. The 'depth' of it regards the abyss of wisdom stooping to death for man, and His profound ways in turning evils to the advantage of His people." What more can be said or sung of this peerless attribute? still—

"God only knows the love of God."

Before we leave the topic of *Pastoral Psalmody*, it may be proper to adventure another INCIDENT or two, by way of a further illustration of its many advantages.

We confess that there are several disorders, and states of patients at given periods of the day, and other circumstances, perfectly obvious to an experienced pastor, which would entirely preclude this otherwise acceptable and inspiring exercise. But

there are others, not a few, in which a solemn, or even lively air, might promise to be as beneficial to the body as grateful to the mind, and, above all, exhilarating and edifying to the soul, of THE INVALID. The charm may, also, be equally powerful upon other members of the family, and upon many "a patient-tired nurse," or other attendants, as well as upon *friends*, whom a pastor's visit may be the opportune occasion of attracting to the spot, and assembling in the room. One or other of these may generally be relied upon to assist the pastor in the otherwise trying exercise of singing; or even by timely notice of his intention, may altogether relieve *him* of that part of the duty. A pocket edition of the Hymn Book, with an aptitude in fixing upon a suitable verse, will greatly facilitate this part of the service.†

How rare the opportunity here entrusted to "the man of God," who by "prayer and pains" hath become "perfect,"—practised and initiated,—yea, "thoroughly furnished unto all good works!" (2 Tim. iii, 17.) Among that group may be the careless to be impressed; the weak to be strengthened; the wavering to be established; the distressed to be

† The Bible, (with references) and Wesley's Hymns, (with supplement) are now bound together, in what is called "Diamond 16's," and may be obtained from John Mason, 14, City Road, London. If encased also, one of these may be, of all things, most appropriate and useful, as a Pastor's Companion: his "Sword and Lyre," truly!

consolated ; the trembling to be assured ; the believer to be "built up ;" the wanderer to be reclaimed ; and, not least, *the disaffected* to be re-attached. Above all, since "where two or three are gathered together in my name," saith the Redeemer, "there am I in the midst of them !" (Matt. xviii, 20,) there is always a call to exalt HIM, and His word, and cause. The affections are now more especially liable to be moved, and to come to a blessed focus ; and thousands, on these providential and gracious occasions, have had to acknowledge the hand of God upon them for good, and feel "his holy arm made bare" within them ; and exclaim, "For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me." (Job. xxiii, 16.) Happy pastor ! thou shalt be amply recompensed for thy labours, and thy oft

———"unbidden tear !"——

if, when the heretofore sullen metal is put into a state of fusion, thou shouldst succeed in "delivering" even a small part of it, (such as shall "obey from the heart") into the ever-waiting "form of doctrine," or mould of divine "grace, mercy, and truth !" Upon any who, at *this moment*, may be so collected, at any such scene, or scenes, we would invoke the emphatic benediction, "THE LORD BE WITH YOU !" responding for them, to their indefatigable pastor,

who is "instantly serving God day and night,"—
 "And with **THY SPIRIT!**" on whom, under God, so much depends, in rendering these dread, but auspicious, occasions, immediately and permanently profitable to all present.

To seasons like these, (numerous and fagging, to pastors, especially Wesleyan pastors, each of whom has many congregations under his charge,) but scattered over the surface of years, in families; and meted out, once in a life time, to some individuals; we may apply those *ruling* directions of the prophet: "Whom shall He teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine; them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: for with stammering lips and another tongue will He speak to this people. To whom He said, this is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing. (Isaiah xxviii, 9-12.)

Yes! there shall be children there, of graduated years, surrounding the dying bed of "her who bare" them, and inexpressibly anxious to learn, through their pastor, that "the consolations of God are (not) small with" her, now! or, it may be, willing to render her, towards the closing scene, the satisfaction which they have hitherto withheld,—

that of knowing that the heart of *each* of them is truly given up to the Saviour; and for which her fading eye yet looks out with insatiate desire, and her paled cheek yet holds in reversion one more flush, (an hectic flush) of maternal delight, and saintly triumph.

Oblivious of "the child's first grief," when severed (as the prophet speaks) from that gentlest bosom, whose beneficent office combined nutriment and repose; and inured to the feebler, yet felt, pangs attendant on each recurring chasm of temporary separation; nothing could ever effectually estrange us from our *only* mother, except the icy and remorseless hand of death. For this fearful crisis, nature hoards her sorrows: and now, the embankment is giving way, and "all thy waves and thy billows are (going) over" them! Alas! alas!

That pastor shall scarcely "labour in vain," who shall endeavour to lead these agonised creatures, to Him whose "years fail not;" and who, with as much more affection towards us than the best of mothers, as He has wisdom and power, is ever heard to say,—“They may forget! yet, will not I forget thee!” (Isaiah xlix, 15.)

Whilst pastoral association may prove opportune and precious, under the most heart-rending circumstances of life, a qualified amount of succour and relief may be imparted at every sick bed, to which access can

be obtained. Nor may the impression be less salutary and permanent, where consanguinity may be more remote, or friendship and kind neighbourhood may constitute the only ties. Affliction opens many eyes besides those of the actual sufferer, and, as attempted to be shown in stronger terms at a previous page, makes the sympathetic human heart of almost every eye-witness to "melt like wax before the fire!"

Even an oft godless poet has bestowed the palm upon a dying testimony, where he thus gravely (oh! why not religiously?) moralizes:—

" ————— The tongues of *dying* men
 Enforce attention, like deep harmony;
 Where words are scarce, they're seldom spent in vain;
 For they breath *truth*, who breath their words in pain.
 He, that no more must say, is listen'd more
 Than they, whom youth and ease have taught to glose;
 More are men's *ends* mark'd, than their lives before:
 (The setting sun! and music at the close!)
 As the last taste of sweets, is *sweetest last*!
Writ in remembrance, more than things long past."

The verity, as much as the affluence, of this description, must be esteemed permanent. Yet, who does not still more admire even the good taste, as well as piety, of that almost equal genius, Addison, one of that race of "giants who have obtained" for their own century, the

" ——— Bright emblazonry ———"

pastoral calls, (whether to "the sick or the sound,") on Sabbath days. Not that it could be easily shown to be unlawful, or even uncongenial with the spirit of the Lord's day, which was emphatically "made for man," to be in part, or where necessity exists, employed in works of mercy (See Mark ii, 23-28); but chiefly, on account of the tax imposed upon the physical strength of ministers on that day, by two, three, or even more! public services in the sanctuary.* Besides, there are several disorders, more or less contagious, which one who has been exercising in the pulpit might be far more liable to contract then, than at another time. But maugre all our prudent scruples, we were not prepared to put a negative upon the application made in this instance. It came from the poor woman's own leader, who was,

* If this should appear to favour the visitation of the sick on the Lord's day, by others than the Pastors of churches, it is not without a strong conviction, that the license may be taken too far by some of our earnest religionists. A man may become so "wise in his own conceit," as to affect that he is unable to profit, under "the Word," as *generally* delivered; and, therefore, may seldom hear any but very lively or very popular men; the latter of whose "visits are like those of angels!" indeed!—"few and far between!" Others, may suppose that they are promoting the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, by spending the entire forenoon of the Sabbath, in seeing the sick, or running after absentee members; forgetting that "THE WAY" OF GOD "IS IN (HIS) SANCTUARY;" and that we are commanded to "praise Him in the congregation of his saints:" adding to all our other efforts to bring sinners to Him, the less exciting, but more telling, system of *Example*, in this, as "in all manner of conversation." We, therefore, go the entire length of that clause, in the immortal "Liverpool Minutes:"—"Let us admonish any individuals, who shall be found to neglect our public worship, under pretence of visiting the sick, or other similar engagements."—(*Minutes of Conference, 1820.*)

moreover, a particular friend of ours, and wishful to accompany us himself on this errand of love, which a journey of several days duration, which he had to commence on the following morning, must have precluded, unless it could have been arranged for us to go together that evening.

Merging personal considerations, we, therefore, took his arm, and proceeded to the house, which might be at the distance of half a mile, and lay in a crowded part of the town. The object of our friend's laudable anxiety resided alone, and being very poor, had no regular attendant even in her last illness. Now and then, a kind hearted neighbour, or perhaps a married daughter, or a granddaughter, might step in, or come across the town, to see after her wants ; and that appeared to be about all the aid she could command from her fellow creatures, relatives included. Her dependence was on the parish, and "the poor's fund" of the society, of which she had long been a worthy member. Many were the shillings, and larger grants, which her affectionate leader, and his excellent predecessor in office, had obtained from that liberal board "by (love) established." We lifted the latch for ourselves, and finding no one below, forthwith ascended the narrow stairs. There was but one in the chamber—the old woman herself! so that this was, indeed, "a solitary apartment." She lay in a deep slumber, but with

the majesty of near four score years imprinted upon her features. There was an awe, not to be described, upon the scene, as her leader, and pastor, beheld this object of their mutual care, without apparent care herself, having long since "cast all her care upon Him" who had promised to "care for" her;—*this* genuine "sheep" of His flock, whom He had "gently led" through all "the wilderness state" of a long life of poverty and trouble, and who now seemed as though folded in His very arms;—*this* weary pilgrim, close upon the end of her journey, with His "rod and staff comforting" her, and supported by His presence, even "though (she) walked through the valley of the shadow of death!" "Tell him!" (said the king of Israel, and wisely he spoke) "Let not him that girdeth on his harness, boast himself as he that putteth it off." (1 Kings xx, 11.)

After waiting for several minutes, we deemed it befitting the occasion of our visit, and the urgency of the hour, to awake her; for which purpose we first tried speaking to her in a gentle tone; but she heard us not. We then spoke somewhat louder; still she "slept on, and took her rest." Her leader now remembered that she was very "hard of hearing," and therefore suggested that we should shout to her. We did so; first, one of us; then the other; then, both together: but she moved not; all was

still as night,—nay, as death itself. For some moments we “marvelled” if the “vital spark” might not have fled. Gazing more intently, we perceived that the clay yet breathed.

What must be done to render her conscious of our presence, and to give her at least some advantage from a visit which had cost us both some toil already, and might never be repeated during the few hours, or at most days, she might be permitted to survive? There was no relative within call, nor even a neighbour whom we knew. Possibly, in the course of half an hour, some one might be coming in, to see that she wanted nothing for the night; but it was too late for us to remain in suspense. At length it was suggested that SINGING might succeed where shouting had been useless, on the well known principle, that *sound will travel farther than noise*. No sooner did we raise the tune than a gentle movement was perceived;—then another more decisive;—and before we had executed half the verse with which we commenced, she opened her eyes and looked round in happy confusion, to see what Being or Beings had entered the room while she had slept. Now, she recognized first her leader, and then her pastor. In another instant, she was feebly rising from her pillow to essay her small remainder of the powers of song; and our three voices vied with each

other in fervor, if not in melody. The verse was—

“There is my house and portion fair,”

and we had reached the fourth line—

“For me my elder brethren stay!”

just as the poor old creature rose and united with us.

The joyful surprise she evinced at hearing and seeing us; more especially, the exquisite adaptation of the all but inspired sentiments of “the sweet singer of (our) Israel,” to her own sleeping and waking visions; besides *our* luxury, in being allowed to minister (as it proved, for the last time) to the faith and joy of this dying saint; constituted a scene which we were not likely ever to forget. Yes! there she sat, and after almost eighty winters had lowered upon her earthly condition, could yet clap her withered hands as she gazed by faith upon

“————— Him, who gave her soul

And all her infinite of prospects fair,

Cut through the shades of Hell, GREAT LOVE, by thee!”

A short chapter and prayer over, we took our leave. What were our subsequent emotions, when we learnt that, at an early hour the following morning, our aged friend had exchanged “mortality” for “life!”

It is impossible for a Wesleyan Pastor to have been often associated, (as in such a case,) in the toils and triumphs of his OFFICE, with any one of that invaluable order of men, the leaders of the Body,

without acquiring a stronger attachment towards such a "fellow-helper to the truth," than almost any other circumstances can possibly produce. Between the individual who was his companion in the above visit, and the writer, there subsisted a more than ordinary friendship. The urbanity of his manners,—the intelligence of his mind,—the warmth of his heart,—most of all, his prompt, (and modestly *prompting*,) co-operation in the work of God,—had not failed, in the course of twelve months, to secure for him a high place in our esteem and affection. His business frequently called him to leave home; and his periodical returns, which were seldom delayed beyond one Sabbath, lest his class, which met on that day, should suffer through his absence, had begun to be looked for by his more and more attached Pastor, with an interest second only to that of his own family.

Within three months of the delightful occasion just related, this amiable young man was prematurely removed to "the better land!" It was in the winter of —41-2, that he started, with a slight cold, on one of his journeys, which he had postponed, for perhaps a week, on account of the delicate circumstances of his beloved wife. He called to inform us that his family joys had been augmented by the birth of a daughter; and shortly afterwards, proceeded on his journey. Within two or three days, he returned in

an alarming state of fever ; and from the sick-bed which he then sought under his own roof, he never rose ! To aggravate the calamity, a lovely boy, the elder of his two children, was seized with a similar disorder, which took him away even before the father ! Thus were we called to witness those family joys, which our friend had so recently, and so gratefully, announced to us, exchanged, as in a moment, for unutterable anguish ; and to hear a young mother, yet too weak to nurse her new-born infant, exclaim—“ My child is dead ! and my husband dying ! What shall I do ? ” Alas ! tears cannot soften the destroyer of our household joys ;—else, what parent, or partner, would not have succeeded in averting or delaying his repeated strokes ?

Nor can a funeral pall, once cast over our dwellings and our hearts, in all instances, exempt from its rapid and aggravated return. No doubt, they were real bereavements that were so thrillingly lamented by the immortal author of “ The Complaint : ”—

“ Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean ?
Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on one ?
Insatiate archer ! could not one suffice ?
Thy shaft flew thrice ; and thrice my peace was slain ;
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had filled her horn.
O Cynthia ! why so pale ? Dost thou lament
Thy wretched neighbour ? ”

This beloved friend's name was JOHN JENNINGS.
Immediately before the watchnight service of

December 31, 1841, he supped with us at our own house ; and after little more than a fortnight's then unimagined calamities, we preached his funeral sermon on Sunday, January 16th, to a deeply-affected auditory ! The text chosen was Rev. vii. 9, 10—“ After this, I beheld, and lo ! a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”

A widely different occasion from that of the peaceful exit of the aged member of our former flock in 1841, induced us, but three months ago, to enterprize the rousing effect of *Psalmody*, upon a young man, attacked by cholera, during the prevalence of the epidemic in this town.* We found him drooping his head upon the shoulder of a pious and zealous friend ; who, regardless of contagion, had undertaken to hold him up in bed, and endeavour, by every means, according to strict medical orders, to keep him awake *if possible*. Despite of all, the deadly stupor continued, menacing not more the success of our visit, than (what was of infinitely greater consequence) *the patient's life !* With some difficulty, the sufferer was made to understand *the*

* Darlaston.

~~name~~—our errand needed no announcement ; and we were happy to witness “ a little reviving ” follow even a communication of the fact that we were in the room. In addition to the brave and worthy brother, who was supporting the poor patient, there were two other men standing with pale countenances at the foot of the bed, and retained, apparently, for whatever services the dread emergency might demand. The young man, himself, had recently joined our society ; and whenever he could be kept awake, continued to evince a grateful relish for spiritual exercises : the precise state of his religious experience we had not understood, and were, therefore, tremblingly anxious to learn from his own lips. But all our endeavours must have proved abortive if, as in the case already detailed, we had not promptly resorted to the exercise of *singing*. This new, and hitherto unthought of, expedient, was hailed by all present, including the young man’s weeping mother, of whom we have more and still sadder things to relate, before we reach the end of this INCIDENT. The first line was no sooner given out, than a lively tune was adapted, and forthwith, the entire company, numbering six persons without the patient, were singing together. It was at once effectual in producing a temporary suspension of the stupor ; and the poor fellow appearing wide awake, in which even partially hopeful

state his friends had never again expected to see him ; the interest of every spectator was soon raised to a high degree, as was clearly to be perceived from their glowing looks and melted eyes. This augmented the strength of the choir ; which was shortly to be yet further reinforced by, first the languid, and then the lifted, voice of the cholera patient himself ! That verse over, we proceeded with needful interrogations, as to the state of the young man's mind, and were not disappointed of clear and favourable replies. Fearful of the return of the stupor, we made speed to lay hold of " the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God ;" and by an excited voice and manner, aimed to secure a deeper sensibility on the part of the whole of our auditors, of its blessed edge and power, in slaying " the man of sin," and " turning to flight the armies of the alien." The responsibility of such an occasion and crisis, was felt to be great indeed ; and as the attention of the individual most nearly concerned in our efforts, continued in full exercise, " we thanked God, and took courage."

A prudential regard for our own safety, together with a wish to disinfect the room, induced us to pour upon the floor a strong preparation of *Chloride of Lime* ; which, it were to be wished, visitors of the sick generally, would take the precaution to furnish themselves with.*

* We used this preparation plentifully, both in the rooms of the patients, and at cholera funerals.

The Scriptures read, we deemed it quite advisable, before prayer, to have a *second verse*, which was even more successful than the former, in drawing out the powers of the oppressed sufferer. We then "bowed (our) knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named," (Eph. iii. 14, 15,) in what was truly one of the most solemn chambers of affliction it had ever been our lot to enter.

"THE PESTILENCE that walketh in darkness," (Psalm xci. 6,) is computed to have destroyed fifty millions of our race, during its second visitation of the earth, in the form of Cholera Morbus. After traversing both tropics, about the close of last year, it rushed towards the south of Europe, and became the scourge of republican, and (we fear) impenitent France, and of Paris in particular. As if in withering mimicry of the yet remembered vauntings of the last Despot of the nations, relative to an invasion of this country, and which he had hurled repeatedly from that very metropolis, now, "the army of England" might be said to be in actual march, clarioned by the press of Europe! Landing at almost the whole of our ports at once, it laughed at our "wooden walls;" and forthwith "dispatches" of its devastating successes were issued from all the points where it appeared to be encamped, in the authentic form of the official "weekly returns."

The above was one of the early "cases" in Darlaston; and might (for aught we knew), be followed by as appalling an amount of mortality, in this least to be desired of all forms, as occurred in 1832. Even *now*, "THE DEATHS," returned from surrounding places, were frightfully numerous. In several of them (as was the case in Darlaston also) all business was suspended! during one or more "set days," long before the arrival of the tardy "Orders in Council," proclaiming a National "Day of Humiliation and Fasting." "The hearts" of thousands, in this apparently (*second time*) doomed district, were indeed "failing them for fear."

At this *very time*, an extensive religious awakening took place in Darlaston especially; and "the people" began to "learn righteousness," while the "judgments" they dreaded were, as yet, scarcely "abroad" *among themselves*. To the "special services" || then held in the town, by each of the Denominations, (the Church of England taking the lead,) must be attributed, under God, the arrest of the pestilence, and the exceedingly small number of individuals, in so crowded, and by no means well provided a population, who fell victims to it, during the recent as compared with the former visitation, and in *Darlas-*

|| It will not be deemed invidious towards the other numerous instruments employed in this glorious revival, to mention with that distinction which they deserve, the extraordinary labours and success of the writer's colleague, *the Rev. W. Tarr*.

ton, compared with surrounding places. "Yea! *in the way* of thy judgments, O LORD! have we waited for thee; the desire of *our* soul, *is* to thy name, and to the remembrance of THEE." (Isaiah xxvi. 8.)

Under such circumstances it was that, on the discharge of the oft-trying duties of *the Pastoral office*, we found ourselves in immediate contact with one of the worst cases of "the disease" witnessed in Darlaston; yet saved from *fear*, and enabled to "have" (what is doubtless the greatest comfort to a Pastor, as it may prove of the first advantage to the objects of his intercessory pleadings), "boldness and access (in Christ Jesus our Lord), with confidence by the faith of HIM." (Eph. iii. 11, 12.) To each petition there were responses, "not loud, but deep," from the patient and his friends. With a perfect sense of the imminent danger which the case involved, and which must always chasten *natural* hope, we asked the removal of the disease; with an unfaltering faith we pleaded for its instant and full sanctification to the soul, over which HE, whose "understanding is infinite," was "sitting as a refiner," to purge "that soul" by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning!" (Mal. iii. 3; and Isaiah iv. 4.) For this "*the Spirit*" of God himself was evidently "making intercession" in the hearts of all present. Not fifty prayers, and sermons, which we had ever

offered up for, or addressed unto, these persons, in the adjacent sanctuary, were so likely to have proved beneficial to them, as this *one Pastoral effort* to grapple with their wants, and sins, at the footstool of Mercy ; with the very "powers of the world to come" filling the room ! and "TESTIFYING" to "one and all !" repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ !" (Acts xx. 21.) Nor were the tokens of mercy and sympathy on the part of that High Priest whom WE HAVE, and who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and himself "poured out cries and tears," withheld from that little company of "tempted" and distressed suppliants. Best of all, the quasi martyr, who, as much as the penitent who was nailed to the cross with Christ, needed to be now assured of forgiveness and Paradise, was enabled to "believe" in Him whom he had "not seen : " therefore was he "blessed !" Indeed, as he was now called to "suffer with Him," so had he the assurance of being, ere long, exalted even to "reign with him !" There was of a truth, in that otherwise fearful chamber,

"The o'erwhelming power of saving grace."

We rose from prayer "like giants refreshed," and raising, for the third time, our united voices in one of "*the songs of Zion*," parted (as it proved) never again to meet on earth. As we descended the stairs, the last lines of this closing verse were repeated, and

we heard the cholera-patient's voice *last of all*, feebly, yet rapturously, singing—

“ See there my Lord upon the tree,
I hear ! I feel ! he died for me ! ”

Before we pass to the final issue of the above case, we have to relate that, on the evening of the day when we performed the trying, yet grateful, pastoral service thus detailed, a married brother of the young man was attacked by the ruthless disease, and in a few hours sank in the unequal conflict ! We saw the former on a Saturday forenoon, and on the following Monday afternoon buried the latter !

How shall we attempt to pourtray that CHOLERA FUNERAL ?

Prudential orders having been taken that persons who had died of the disease should be brought direct into the burial ground, without being first deposited in the interior of the chapel,—with an aching heart we repaired to the gate at which the mournful procession was to enter ; and meeting it in the usual manner, lifted up that solemn affirmation which our Saviour himself prepared for such an occasion :—“ I am the resurrection and the life ! ” (saith the Lord), “ he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me, shall never die ! ” Preceding the

corpse along the spacious inclosure to the extreme corner, marked out for the final repose of such as had died, *or might yet die*, of CHOLERA, we there read a selection from the full burial service, as abridged by Mr. Wesley. No sooner was the corpse lowered, than the cries of the principal mourners rose into the air, in a manner altogether unusual in this quiet and patient country. But the occasion more than justified the truly painful excitement. One of the family in his grave! another on his dying bed, sinking under the continued blows of the same mysterious invader!—both, *young men!* the pride of their connexions! Who could forbid nature to give vent, at such a crisis, to some part at least of her inward agony?

Seizing a brief interval of composure, we addressed ourselves to a conclusion of the sad ceremony; and the rather, since we saw *the bearers* continually plying the disinfecting odours of rue, or other herbs, with which they had provided themselves; appearing uneasy, though not impatient.

The service closed with a verse, or *dirge*, adapted to the suddenness of the dispensation. With slow steps, we were preparing to leave a spot too appalling to linger at, when we were recalled by the new and augmented cries and shrieks of the female part of the family, echoed by the swelling sobs of many of their friends, or the spectators, whether men, women,

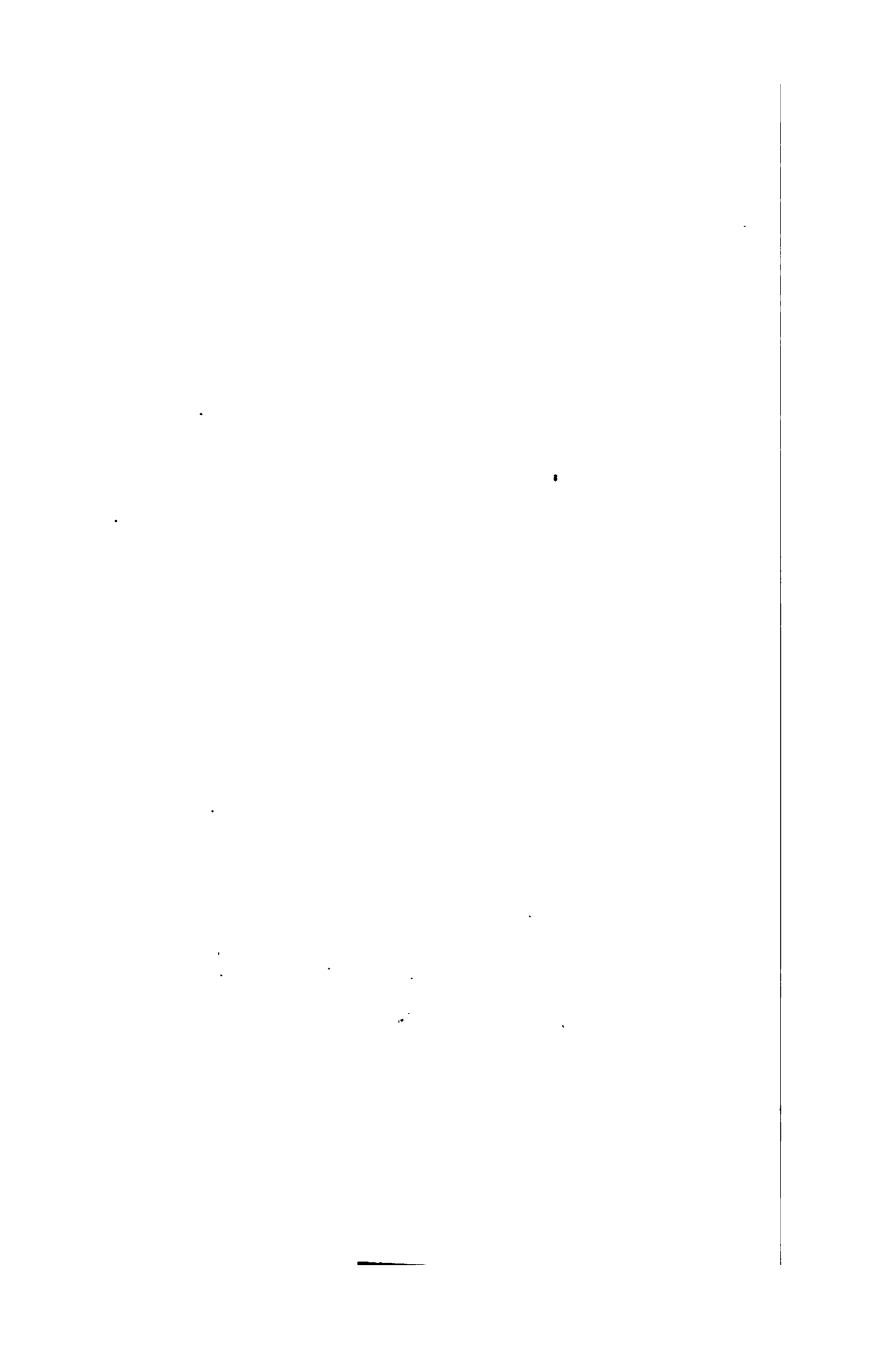
or children, who almost filled the burial ground, and threatened to convert it into one "valley of weeping!" More fearful of *infection*, even than anxious to lessen an excitement, which, as it accumulated, was sure to become more and more agonising to us all, we now promptly returned to the side of the grave; and, for the first time in an experience of *twenty years* in funeral solemnities and sorrows, employed our personal influence, and even considerable physical effort, to induce the spell-bound members of the family, to quit a spot so honoured as the receptacle of their beloved dead, and so soon (as they had a thousand reasons for apprehending) to be again visited, to commit to the same tomb another equally dear to them, and who had been expected to be the earlier victim. Taking hold of the mother with one hand, and one of her daughters with the other, we exhorted them to resignation; which, however difficult, might best become the professed disciples of HIM "who hath taught us by his holy apostle St. Paul, not to sorrow as those that have no hope." We prevailed in part; and re-led the procession towards the gate of the burial ground; which, in the course of a few days, had to be re-entered by the same heart-broken family, on the occasion of the funeral of the other young man, whom we left so diligently preparing to meet his end, and who did not long survive the committal to the earth of the remains of his elder brother.



Cholera Funeral at Darlaston. October, 1849.



"Taking hold of the mother with one hand, and one of her daughters with the other, we exhorted them to resignation."



This heart-rending narrative of but a fragment of the ravages of *England's scourge* (albeit that scourge might be *prepared* for other nations, but reserved for *ours* in recompense of equal, if not greater guilt) must be concluded by our recording "the same event" as happening to the excellent *mother* of the above young men, who had waited on each of them, in his mortal affliction, and, when the second had been interred, had to be borne from that still more insupportable scene to her own bed, to undergo herself a similar visitation to that which had "deprived her of (them) both" (as it were) "in one day."

Another week,——and the surviving children had lost their mother also !

Several other families, in Darlaston and the neighbourhood, suffered severe and irreparable losses, during the prevalence of the fatal epidemic ; but none present the same amount of desolation as the above. Nor is such an *Incident* less befitting our page, from the circumstance that several of the T——s were in communion with the Wesleyans ; and the *mother* (as was the case also with *two other excellent members* of the body recently deceased, viz. Messrs. Lingard and Holt) was deemed worthy of respectful allusion and tribute from the Wesleyan pulpit, at the close of a funeral sermon preached by

the Resident Minister, on the evening of October 28, 1849, only a few weeks after the solemn occurrences here related, on occasion of the lamented decease, after a brief illness, of a young person of the Society, who had been, for several years, no ordinary pattern of piety, prudence, and usefulness, to all those who had the happiness of her acquaintance.*

It is time to close our remarks on *Pastoral Psalmody*. Whatever may become of the arguments we have ventured to urge on behalf of that useful, and by no means difficult, exercise ;—the reader is certain to have sympathised largely with *Pastoral sorrows*, as delineated in this chapter.

“ This cheek, a train of tears bedews ;
And each tear mourns its own distinct distress ;
And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands
Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.
A grief like this proprietors excludes :
Not friends alone such obsequies deplore ;
They make *mankind the mourner*.”

“ THE COMPLAINT : ” *Night the Third*, p. 68.

* The name of this estimable individual was Arculus ; and the genuine sorrow, on account of her loss, evinced by the highly respectable family with whom she resided, together with the immense crowd who filled and overflowed the chapel on the above occasion, served to stamp her memory with a distinction seldom awarded to one so young, and occupying only a subordinate position in society. Her “ spiritual letters,” continued for more than two years, are, of themselves, worthy of notice far beyond her own circle.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

PASTORAL SERVICES EXTRAORDINARY.

PRIVATE ORATORY, SACRAMENTS, ECONOMICAL AND JUVENILE DEPARTMENTS.

“From glory then to glory, *thou* shalt rise,
Or sink from deep to deeper miseries;
Ascend perfection’s everlasting scale,
Or still descend from gulph to gulph in hell.
Thou embryo angel! or thou infant fiend!
A being now begun, but ne’er to end.”
“*Birth of a Son.*”—*President Davis.*

“In the *forenoon*, I felt a power of intercession for precious immortal souls, for the advancement of the kingdom of my dear Lord and Saviour in the world, and withal, a most sweet resignation, and even consolation and joy, in the thoughts of suffering hardship, distresses, and even death itself, in the promotion of it; and had special enlargement in pleading for the enlightening and conversion of the poor Heathen. In the *afternoon*, God was with me of a truth. Oh, it was blessed company indeed! God enabled me so to agonize in prayer, that I was quite wet with sweat, though in the shade, and the wind cool. My soul was drawn out very much for the world. I *grasped* for multitudes of souls! I think I had more enlargement for sinners than for the children of God; though I felt as if I could spend my life in cries for both.”—*Brainerd’s Diary.*

There are several notable instances recorded in the Scriptures, of personal and solitary communion

with the Almighty, which may be elevated into Examples to the Christian, but emphatically, to every Minister of "the word," and Pastor of souls.

In another connexion, we refer to Abraham interceding for the already doomed cities ; and to Jacob, "wrestling with the Angel." But neither of these will exactly indicate the PRIVATE ORATORY of a "man of God," whose "high calling" should attract him to his Master's more immediate presence, and who may have "boldness," not "once a year" only, but daily, to "enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus." (Heb. xvi. 19.) The latter instance, indeed, while altogether unique in some of its circumstances, and normal or prescriptive, in its aspect towards future ages, and other sound conversions, cannot be contemplated as at all official in its character ; or even as minutely illustrative of stated communion between the children of God and their heavenly Father, "who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ."

That class of divine audiences which we should wish to be daily enjoyed, whether for personal or pastoral purposes, appears to have been devoutly longed for, in that deep and remonstrant exclamation of the deserted Patriarch : "Oh that I knew where I might find Him ! that I might come even to His seat ! I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words

which He would answer me, and understand what He would say unto me. Will He plead against me with His great power? No; but He would put *strength* in me. There the righteous might dispute with Him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge." (Job 23, 3-7.)

We differ from those who would impute any thing of the *morbid* to this truly dignified, and eloquent, appeal of a consciously upright sufferer, to the Searcher of Hearts, against the hasty and prejudiced decisions of his "friends." It is like the defendant (under advice) traversing, in order to have judgment reversed. He now becomes plaintiff; and not only himself and friends, but his well-instructed counsel, are, once more, primed for a favourable adjudication. Not only has he confidence in his cause, but in his "judge,"—who can, and, he believes, will, "deliver" him from the false verdict by which his fortunes seem, at present, doomed. The higher the tribunal, the more emancipated from all undue influences; the better versed in legal subtleties, and moral perplexities; and the more certain to give a judgment according to law; or, if "in *equity*," according to *right*.*

* *Mythology*, with an unintended, but affecting, parody of the truth, has feigned that, in the golden age, ASTREA, the goddess of justice, lived on the earth, with many other deities, but that, offended at men's vices, they all fled to heaven. She, however, lingered the latest, being unwilling to quit a sphere, where her presence was likely to be even more necessary in proportion to the increasing wickedness of mankind.

Pre-eminently successful was the appeal of the stricken, and calumniated, Man of Uz, to the Supremeest Court. He whose never-to-be-forgotten "afflictions" have been even set to music,† the better to convey the lugubrious notes which were wont to pour from his riven heart, was more than acquitted of wanton sin, or of any kind of cognisable offence whatever. That he was faultless had been never affected by himself; that there was any "secret thing with" him, might have been as fearlessly denied. How

"Divinely confident and bold,"

is his challenged access to the very council chamber of Jehovah, where he declares to his unadvised accusers, "I will teach you by the hand of God: that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal." (Job xxvii, 11.)

The master "doctrine" (*moral* is too worn a term to apply to the objective grandeur of "the mind of the Spirit" in Scripture) of this very ancient, perhaps eldest, portion of the sacred biography, is, doubtless, *the cross-wise administration* of the Almighty, in his providence, with his still loved, and yet more, and, more, loved people,—His "own" people. What an

+ Of course, we refer to that fine composition, called "Job's Anthem,"—an adaptation to the *unrest* (modern parlance "excited state") of the illustrious sufferer:—"When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day!" (Job vii, 4.)

ante-dating of the developments of the final day, in regard to myriads of individuals, for whose *entire* history time is too narrow a stage, is that jubilant finale of the Apostle—"Behold! we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen THE END of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." (James v, 11.)

The triumphant "judgment" which Job realised by his meek, yet confiding, appeal to "the Judge of all;" the succumbing of his "friends," whose unmerited reproaches exposed them to "the wrath" of the Court; the "turning (of his) captivity;" the re-construction of his fortunes and family; and the holy luxury of the next *one hundred and forty years!* during which he remained in possession of the first reputation upon earth, and administered, in person, the affairs of his princely house;—all this demonstrates the only depositary of strength to be the "arm of the Lord." It proclaims "the highest style of man," to hover above, and beam from within, "the cleft of the rock." It conjures the believer that he hesitate not to commit his *entirety* into the ever blessed, and ever mighty, hands of his Redeemer. It unveils the impregnable fortress, and the immovable anchor, which are "the heritage of the righteous," and of which they are "seized and possessed" for evermore! Oh! thou "worm, and no man!" who

art "less than nothing," of thyself,—thou may'st hide thy "life with Christ in God," and be "one with Him, as (He) is one with (His) Father;" and thou may'st "go in and out" before thy awful Maker, in an unchallenged exercise of rapturous access, and assimilating communion.

" HEREFTER none can take away
My life, or goods, or fame;
Ready at thy demand to lay
Them down I always am:

Confiding in thy ONLY love,
Through Jesus strength'ning me,
I wait thy faithfulness to prove,
And give back ALL TO THEE."—C. Wesley.

Nothing can less require to be demonstrated than that the proper *status* of the pastorate is Nearness to God; as His chosen and peculiar servants, whose daily vocation is to bring them into His more immediate presence, and into "the secret of His pavilion." Our PRIVATE ORATORY is even of greater importance than our *public sphere*; just as the secret springs of an excellent fountain, by reason of their inherency, and reproductiveness, exceed in value the living streams which perennially gush from its bosom; or, as the first recipience of light by every star in the heavens, must, in its causal, and quenchless power, claim to be more considered and honoured than all the secondary and dependent illumination, which it

is thereby, and thereby *alone*, qualified to diffuse throughout its own, or reflect toward another, and remoter, sphere.

It might appear invidious, and prove misleading, to attempt to adjust the respective degrees in which the anointing oil of divine communion and gladness may have been, or may now be, enjoyed by that, or this, age of the Church ; by our own, or some other, denomination ; by ministers, leaders, or people ; by the occupants of one, or another, temporal sphere, or spiritual office ; by any one, or ten, " names," of such as have " fallen asleep," or yet " seem to be pillars." The grand eminence of our Dispensation is to be seen in " THE PROMISES ;" all of which, " in HIM are Yea ! and in HIM, Amen ! unto the glory of God by us." (2 Cor. i, 20.) These may suggest another allusive fulfilment of the mystic " ladder" which stood confest before the sleeping fugitive at Bethel, in that most spiritual and felicitous of dreams, whose sublimity and sweetness, if attained by several other interpretations, seem yet unendangered of exhaustion. It was set up on the earth ; and the top of it reached to heaven ! (Gen. xxviii. 12.) Once above the ground, by the first step in salvation, we may, from that auspicious hour, continue to advance " from faith to faith." Resting firmly upon each ascending promise, we may both make sure our possession of " the present grace wherein we stand,"

and "go on to perfection." Each present attainment is to be but a stepping stone to the next above it. The higher we climb in holiness, the more fair and congenial we find the surrounding region; the more intimate, blissful, and transforming, our communion with the Saviour; the more alluring the prospect of our final consummation in His "Presence, (where) is fulness of joy, (and) at (His) right hand (where) there are pleasures for evermore!" (Psalm xvi, 11.) Meanwhile, our upward path is compassed by "the angels of God, ascending and descending on it,"—guarding our head and watching our feet—probably whispering to our thoughts their own holy aspirations, or filling the air with the *felt* music of their generous gratulations, and augmented praises.

There have not lacked examples of exalted piety in our own communion. Some we may have known—perhaps *possessed* in the nearer relations of life, or the bonds of sanctified friendship, of whom it might be said that they "*walked with God!*" They now "are not;" yet they live immortally in our heart of hearts; and we daily feel as though "baptised" for them! If not personally, or denominationally, connected with these "excellent of the earth," their blessed and venerated names have been reclaimed from the spoils of the destroyer; and some of their holy deeds and "divine sentences," are treasured among the archives

of the living Church, which rejoices in them as an unsectarian and universal heir-loom, to descend, through the biographic page, to future ages ;—" that the generation to come might know them, even the children who should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children." (Ps. lxxviii, 6.)

The front of our chapter is adorned by a passage from the Diary of BRAINERD, one of the most devoted and heroic of " the sacramental host," of modern Missionaries. This extraordinary person, whose character and worth are, upwards of a hundred years after his decease, only the more admired and renowned, among all sections of the Christian Church, was taken away by a rapid decline, before he was *thirty years old* ! His excellent biographer, *Jonathan Edwards*—himself an eminent divine, and the historian of some of the early, and truly glorious, revivals of religion, in the American States,—says of Brainerd, " He was one of distinguished natural abilities : he was a minister of the Gospel, and one who was called to unusual services in that work, *an account of which has already been given to the public* ; one whose course of religion began before the late times of extraordinary religious commotion, but yet lived in those times and went through them." This implied that he had "laboured," and others had "entered into (his) labours." Yet more, when (under God)

he had been enabled to prepare the way for other labourers, and to excite and direct them by his example and system, it was vouchsafed him to see, in an incredibly short space of time, and while he was yet a young minister, and missionary, numerous *churches* planted among the most ignorant, and barbarous tribes then known! Nor was this, by any means, the sum of his success; but, roused by the reports of the astonishing work of God, of which he had been almost the sole instrument among the Pagan Indians; and, perhaps, still more, by his occasional visits, and stirring appeals; many of the formal and dogmatic children of the Puritan emigrants were seen casting off spiritual sloth, and girding themselves anew for the holy warfare. *Revivals* now became "*the topic*" throughout the Colonies; and the results were only second to those which, at the very same time, were taking place in *the parent country*, under the apostolic ministry of the Wesleys, and Whitfield.

The grand secret of these Ministerial and Missionary triumphs, which are, doubtless, thrilling with an ever accumulating power and rapture, "before the throne," and, next to the Pentecostal, stand forth as a kind of type of true Evangelism,—high, spiritual, and resistless, lay in Brainerd's *Private Oratory*. No doubt every one "whose spirit God has raised," (Ezra i, 8.) to an amended tone of

gracious desire and hope, will gladly accompany us, even a second time, into that unworldly and sequestered spot, sacred to the wrestling prayers, the tears, and sighs, and groans, of one of the holiest and *dearest* of the Lord's servants, for the salvation of a lost world; and to all the hallowing discipline of vehement and protracted, yet *secret*, devotion. It were possible to transcribe from a diary, kept so exclusively for a mirror of his own heart, that it was with the greatest reluctance he consented not to destroy the whole, when he was thought to be in a dying state, entries of the above character, bearing consecutive dates, and extending over nearly all the years of his ministry. Perhaps, however, the following may suffice for the end we contemplate, which is to induce ourselves and other pastors to become greater *intercessors* for the objects of our charge, and for *souls* in general:

“ Wednesday, April 28, 1742.—Withdrew to *my usual place* of retirement in great peace and tranquility, and spent about *two hours* in secret duties. I felt much as I did yesterday morning, only weaker and more overcome. I seemed to depend wholly on my dear Lord, and to be entirely weaned from all other dependencies. I knew not what to say to my God, could only *lean on his bosom*, as it were, and breath out my desires after a perfect conformity to him in all things. Thirsting desires and insatiable longings possessed my soul after perfect holiness. God was so precious to my soul, that the world, with all its enjoyments, was infinitely vile. I had

no more value for the favour of men than for pebbles. The Lord was my All, and he over ruled all, which greatly delighted me. I think my faith and dependence on God scarcely ever rose so high. I saw Him such a fountain of goodness, that it seemed impossible I should mistrust Him again, or be any way anxious about anything that might happen to me. I now enjoyed great satisfaction in praying for absent friends, and for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom in the world. Much of the power of these divine enjoyments *remained with me through the day.*"

When a sanctified spirit is no longer sublunary, and, therefore, no longer, in any sense, "subject to vanity," there appears no breach of delicacy in thus removing the veil from her most secluded, but, unquestionably, her purest and most laudable exercises, and allowing them to stand confessed, not only before all who may be like-minded, but even before a luke-warm and godless generation. For they are like the "faith (of) Noah, by the which he (both) prepared an ark and *condemned the world.*" (Hebrews, xi, 7.)

To every member of the pastorate, however, such instances of holy fire upon "the mean altar," of another's heart, ascending in flames of desire, and love, and zeal, towards that Heaven from which it first descended, must prove more than ordinarily instructive and profitable. Let us *emulate the habit!* and "immediately confer not with flesh and blood," which are certain to shrink from its seeming severity,

and to seek to interfere with its happy and effective permanency.

The itinerant life has brought us the acquaintance, and friendship, of not a few persons of eminent piety and extensive usefulness. Among other gracious qualities by which this high order of Christians have been ever found distinguished, has been that of *fidelity* in the whole of their social intercourse. Even a junior member of the pastorate, when alone with them, might calculate upon a well-timed caution, perhaps a modest reproof, if he were apparently in a languishing state of piety, or too much addicted to thoughtlessness and flippancy. We ourselves, especially in our novitiate, remember to have enjoyed, in several places where we exercised our ministry, "a beneficial interest" in the plain yet affectionate style, always allowed to these worthy "elders;" combining the results of profound thought, extensive reading, and valuable experience. Of such it might be said, "Ye know the man and his communication." (2 Kings, ix, 11.) If, occasionally, the chair of the censor might appear to be taken, it was generally with a real unwillingness; and for one touch of the jealous and faithful caustic, you might be certain of a whole box of the urgent of respect and love,—mild, healing, and precious! "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent

oil which shall not break my head." (Psalm cxli, 5.)

"Much beautiful, and excellent, and fair,
 Was seen beneath the sun; but nought was seen
 More beautiful, or excellent, or fair,
 Than face of *faithful* friend; fairest when seen
 In darkest day: and many sounds were sweet,
 Most ravishing, and pleasant to the ear;
 But sweeter none than voice of *faithful* friend;
 Sweet always, sweetest heard in loudest storms.
 Some I remember, and will ne'er forget;
 My early friends, friends of my evil day;
 Friends in my mirth, friends in my misery too,
 Friends given by God in mercy and in love;
 My counsellors, my comforters, and guides:
 _____ in doubt
 My oracles; my wings in high pursuit.

These I remember, these *selectest* men,
 And would their names record; but what avails
 My mention of their names?"

Some of these excellent individuals now "rest
 from their labours, and their works do follow them."
 (Rev. xiv, 13.)

"Before the Throne

They stand, illustrious 'mong the loudest harps!
 And will receive thee glad! my friend and theirs!
 For all are friends in heaven, *all faithful friends!*"

(*Pollok: Course of Time, Book 5.*)

We may here recall an *Incident*, not at all
 flattering at the time, yet productive of more
 advantage than a thousand honeyed compliments,

and therefore remembered with respect and esteem, while all of the latter description have been evanescent, if not disgusting. It was early in our fourth year of travelling, and a few months after our appointment to the ——— circuit, that we accomplished a long intended call at the house of one of our Leaders. He was not himself within, but we were introduced to Mrs. ———, and quickly found ourselves in the presence of “a Mother in Israel.” Kind without compliment, she breathed an atmosphere of devout piety, and godly zeal. The spiritual state of the society was not, at that time, particularly prosperous; but she was one of those whom the prophet sets forth, under the happy figure of “a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be *careful in the year of drought*, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” (Jer. xvii. 8.)

It would have been in vain for the most superficial talker to have endeavoured to lead this holy woman into the barren domain of news, or other impertinencies. Neither was it ever a failing of ours to assail the ear of reverend piety especially, with the unwelcome harshness of loquacious trifling.*

* How characteristic the scene drawn by Bunyan, between “FAITHFUL” and “TALKATIVE:”—

“Well then, said *Faithful*, what is that *one thing* that we shall at

Of late we have become increasingly averse to *unbend* (as it is called) even among brethren, and equals. The eyes of the young are also ever open; and, if as yet indifferent to religion, they are early, and acute, judges of consistency.

The tendency of the human heart is often the inverse of truth and wisdom. The more juvenile the pastor, in general the less disposed to be schooled into those innumerable exactitudes, which are seldom learned except by sitting at the feet of our elders; who are, sometimes, as *free* as they are observant. An unlettered critic, too, may be quite as likely to hit the mark, as one of greater refinement, and will be less restrained by considerations of taste and delicacy. "He that refuseth reproof erreth:" (Prov. x. 17.) and it is sinful pride that would take umbrage at any sound friend, who may have been wont, for a series of years, to occupy the unthanked office of volunteer-lay-tutor to the *young preachers*

this time found our discourse upon?

TALK. What you will: I will talk of things heavenly or things earthly; things moral or things evangelical; things sacred or things profane; things past or things to come; things foreign or things at home; things more essential or things circumstantial; provided that all be done to our profit.

Now did *Faithful* begin to wonder, and stepping to Christian (for he walked all this while by himself) he said to him, but softly, What a brave companion have we got! Surely this man will make a very excellent pilgrim.

At this Christian modestly smiled, and said, This man, with whom you are so taken, will beguile with this tongue of his twenty of them who know him not."

successively appointed to the circuit in which he resides.

The principal matter upon which our venerable friend Mrs. B. exercised her fidelity, during our brief call, was the state of our own experience, as to which she appeared to "stand in doubt;" not from any thing exceptionable which she had observed, or suspected, in us, when out of the pulpit, but purely from the character of our preaching. "Either" (said she) "*we are in a very low state, or you certainly need another dip!*" We were spirited enough to support the former supposition, and yet candidly admitted that the latter, also, was by no means groundless.

Blessed be God! *we have had* our fresh immersions into the element of divine light, and life, and power, *repeatedly*, since that well remembered interview. Nevertheless, at this distant date, and on *the last evening* of the most prosperous year of our ministry (while hurrying our page under the exciting anticipation of *watch-night-solemnities*) we are perfectly conscious of both an urgent need, and insatiate desire, for *yet another* baptism of the Spirit,—more abundant, transforming, and glorious. Such living streams of divine influence are identified with the dispensation under which we live and preach; and of our great High Priest, through whom they are received, it is said—"For God giveth not the Spirit

by measure unto him." (John iii, 34.) May the purchased and promised gift descend *this night*, || in pentecostal plenitude, upon both pastors and congregations, throughout our beloved connexion !

The above searching, yet by no means offensive, allusion to a defect in our pulpit labours, was supplemented by an almost equally valuable observation on the subject of "Historical Parallels," taken from the scriptures, and often *wire-drawn* far beyond what can tend to edification. "Be shorter and more pointed," said our worthy monitress, "upon Scripture characters. For instance, when preaching about David, remember it is not David's poor soul that wants saving, but *the souls of the people* !" That, also, was to us "as a nail in a sure place."

Prayer closed this salutary interview ; and ere we renewed our call, there had been symptoms of revival in the societies both in town and country. For this improved tone, we, in conjunction with our two talented colleagues, laboured hard and prayed fervently ; and it is probable that even those who, in times of depression and decrease, might be somewhat fastidious in their estimate of preaching, would be far more easily satisfied with inferior discourses, delivered under the inspiring zest of a revival. At one of the country places, *then* called Halshaw Moor, *now* Farnworth, many were "added to the

church" in the course of the first winter we passed among them ; and the work was as permanent as it had been rapid. This was the more remarkable, inasmuch as we had been premonished by some of the friends residing in the town, not to expect much encouragement in our *revival* efforts at that place, on account of the *solid*, rather than *lively*, type of that particular society. For our encouragement, however, a circumstance occurred at our very first appointment there, which indicated a movement in the direction of co-operative zeal. We were in our second hymn, and inwardly engaged with our Divine Master for some token for good to be vouchsafed during the service, when the Apparitor, or Chapel-keeper, who was also a leader, claimed our attention to a *notice or two* which he was in the act of depositing upon the ledge of the pulpit. We should scarcely have bestowed a thought upon so common a circumstance had not a more than average interest in the cause of God been depicted on the good man's countenance. He had been in the army, and had all that ceremony and deference of manners which result from habitual subordination, and ensure you against awkwardness and familiarity ; either of which, in a person holding *this* office, is sufficiently offensive, and not to be atoned for by *age*, or even *piety*.

It was evident that the man who so worthily filled the situation, at the place and time in question, was desirous of whispering something in the ear of his new pastor; and on a gentle inclination towards him, he commenced ejaculating a brief prayer! to the effect of—"May the Lord help you to *lay on* to night! for there are many strangers and unconverted characters here." Thanking him for his suggestion, and responding devoutly to his good invocation, we commenced our discourse, in which we had not proceeded far ere there were evident symptoms of a gracious influence upon the people. We applied our theme, which was a solemn and awakening one, to the consciences of both the saved and unsaved, and closing the service with an earnest (we might almost say *agonizing*) prayer, descended into the body of the chapel for the purpose of holding a prayer meeting.

Souls were saved that night, and the expectations of the society raised; nor did we meet with more co-operation in any other part of the circuit than at this very place, despite of its former character for quietude. Each succeeding Sabbath and week evening service evinced more and more of the spirit of hearing; and soon the revival became a delightful *fact*, and the "*power*" attending the ordinances seemed to be cumulative and irresistible. The *young*, especially, had their "hearts opened to attend

unto the things spoken " to them ; and in a few weeks "Salvation!" became the theme and " song " of the neighbourhood. The numerical increase of the society was considerable ; and almost equally important was the impetus given to the piety and zeal of the older members.

The class conducted by good W—— C—— participated largely in the blessing and increase ; and he was to us, and his other pastors, " as a right hand." Such apparitors are, indeed, invaluable ; whether for the assistance and solace they are able to render the pastorate and its co-adjutors, or the equally important services they may contribute, in many ways, both to our members and hearers, attaching numbers more firmly to the sanctuary, and even gathering, with their own hands, not a few into the fold of Christ. " I had " (a thousand times) " rather be (such) a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psalm lxxxiv, 10.)

" How base the noblest pleasures *there* !
 How great the weakest child of *thine* !
 His *meanest* task is all divine !
 And KINGS AND PRIESTS thy servants are ! "

C. Wesley.

Humble, faithful, and enterprising occupants of this important, though subordinate, position, might be compared to *the prophet's servant* on Mount

Carmel, when despatched by his illustrious master to observe the omens of the sky, after the three years' drought. Elijah himself was "down upon the earth, (with) his face between his knees," agonizing with the Almighty on behalf of a perishing people; but, after a mighty, and perhaps protracted, struggle in that *private* oratory, he "said to his servant—Go up now, look toward the sea!" To the loftiest peak of the mountain he willingly and wistfully ascended, but returned with disappointment, saying "There is nothing!" Another impassioned, yea, bleeding and resistless, appeal by the prostrate Elijah, at the footstool of mercy, and the more than ever comforted and confident prophet repeated the mandate, saying,—“Go again! ————— *seven times!*” Uncounted and unwearied were that servant's steps, for

“Tis *love* that makes our cheerful feet
In swift obedience move.”

His was, undoubtedly, a “free will” service to the Lord, his master, and his country. What was the reward which crowned his subordinate, yet arduous and affectionate, toils, when “it came to pass, at the seventh time, that” (running probably at his utmost speed, and as over-joyed as he was overheated,) “he said, yea, *shouted!*—Behold! there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's

hand!" Blessed servant of a still more blessed master! why shouldst thou be forgotten? Thy unaffected sympathy with the sad condition of an oppressed and famishing people,—thy visible identity with "the cause," in reference to which thou hadst to act thy humble part,—thy uncompelled alacrity, and unpurchasable love, so clearly evidenced at the grand crisis,—thy honest, perhaps vociferous, triumph in the magnificent change which followed "the fervent and effectual prayer of (the) righteous" and anointed prophet; were *all* most excellent in their place and season, and merit the honorable mention awarded them upon the sacred page. Be it the continual endeavour of each subordinate functionary selected to attend upon the servants of God, and to wait in his sanctuaries, to emulate these high qualities and acts: let them be ever found at the post of duty, whether on ordinary and stipulated occasions, or at "*special services*." The state of that "corner of the vineyard" where any one of them may serve, and hard by which he may himself reside, may alternate; but whether it enjoy settled prosperity, or, after a time of spiritual drought, be suddenly visited with "showers of blessing," "the Lord of the vineyard" will not alone recognise therein the labours of his more eminent servants, but will approve and reward those also who may have been "faithful in that which is least." All

who shall have, in any way, *subverted* the comfort and success of His ministers in particular, may rest assured that in "the great day," they will, in a manner, and to a degree, that will excite the wonder of angels, of the rest of the saints, and, above all, of themselves, "receive (even) *a prophet's reward!*" (Matt. x, 41.) "Remember me," (may all such venture to request, and *claim* from Him who "is not unrighteous to forget,")—"Remember me, -O my God, *for my good!*" (Neh. xiii, 31.)

Our revered patroness, Mrs. B., ought not to be denied her meed of felicitation, on account of whatever degree of amendment, either in our piety or preaching, might (under God) result from her candid and prayerful counsels. Before we quite dismiss the *Incident* which connects itself with the current matter of our last three pages, we may recall yet another of those select memorabilia * which this "Mother in Israel" was wont to deal out, in preference to compliment and common place. Dilating still upon the depressed tone of piety then undeniably prevalent in our two *town congregations*, she discriminated, with much accuracy, between some who appeared *alive* to this discouraging state of "the best things," and others who could look upon it with seeming unconcern, or even forget it, so long as there was peace in the society, and external or

* Apposite and impressive observations.

financial prosperity. Of one of the former she significantly said,—“ I know him to be a *sufferer* !” while singling out a comfortable specimen of the latter temperament, she testified her belief that he was “ *no sufferer* !” We felt not a little soothed when, in the opinion of this observant and “ spiritual ” person, *we* were allowed to rank with these—

“ *Sufferers* in his righteous cause,
Followers of the dying God.”

On all occasions would we make the cause of God our own,—adapting our prompt and gushing sympathies to the oft varying fortunes of “ the ark of the covenant ;” being of a “ sad countenance,” like Nehemiah, (even in the presence of the king,) so long as Zion languishes ; but caught up into the Redeemer’s raptures, whenever permitted, like Himself at the return of “ the seventy,” to “ behold Satan as lightning fall from heaven !”

If there be any one department of Christian character in which the personal habitudes of a pastor must necessarily give the key-note to his ministrations, it is that of his *closet exercises* ; whether frequent or infrequent, intense or perfunctory. Let him abandon *the private oratory*, and the study (so called) may be over-stocked with books, but it will be empty of God ; a plethora of learning may co-

exist with a vacuum of grace; the ambassador of Christ may boast of his "credentials," yet lack a "message;" the truths of religion may be understood and classified for oral delivery, and *the memoriter trick* may surprise the ear of the many, but "spiritual" judges will look in vain for "the abundance of the heart." Verbosity is indeed but seldom found united with "the unction of preaching," for which it may be said to have no affinity.

The parlour exhibits more of character than the pulpit. The style of the latter is professional and sacred,—that of the former, more strictly natural. What a pastor *is* he may be expected to *appear* in company. If wanting in repartee, he is allowed influence. Another might be deemed stiff in declining all games, and other levities; but *he* will scarcely ever be interfered with; and, if not dogmatic, may almost rule the conversation. Here is the test! If "a man after God's own heart," he will endeavour to enlist social intercourse "on the Lord's side,"—to entwine the chaplet of friendship around that head which was once crowned with "thorns," and by the urbanities and charities of which he is himself composed, constrain every one to take "knowledge of (him) that he has been with Jesus."

Never, beloved brethren! let us ascend the pulpit (even on a week-night) without having first fulfilled that solemn resolve of the prophet,—“I will stand

upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." (Hab. ii, 1.) Never let us venture into society without having first sought to be "anointed with fresh oil," the savour of which cannot be hid, but shall both disseminate itself through the brief period of our sojourn, and at our departure be left behind us. It is this habitual reception and diffusion of "the grace of our Lord, which is exceeding abundant with faith and love," that—

"As servants of the Lord Most High !
As zealous for his glorious name !"

shall best become us every where, and, both during life and after our decease, can alone cause the *name* of any of us to be "*much set by*." (1 Sam. xviii, 30.)

Of all the functions of the pastorate, undoubtedly the deepest solemnity, and the richest efficacy, may be awarded to the dispensation of the Two SACRAMENTS. The province of our annotations being rather domiciliary than congregational, we must pursue our topic among those special and *extraordinary* ministrations of these holy rites, which, in cases of emergency, have to be performed in private. In some neighbourhoods, applications for *private baptisms* are numerous, and require to be thoroughly sifted before they are acceded to ; otherwise there

may be many needless journeys imposed upon a burdened pastor, and the solemnity itself may be greatly and guiltily disparaged. It were well to have the godly rule * of our connexion on this subject occasionally rehearsed in our congregations, or society meetings.

Mortal sickness in *any* infant (when duly certified) is a sufficient call upon a pastor to use all convenient dispatch in reaching the scene, lest its dying unbaptized should exacerbate parental anguish, and, under the stern regime of some worshipper of "the rubric," endanger Christian burial.

Appeals of this description often find us little prepared as to the requisite leisure. If not absorbed in study, one is almost sure to be setting out for a country appointment in an *opposite* direction. We were in the former of these predicaments on one occasion when our services were requested on behalf of "one of these little ones." It was in Manchester, where, as in all crowded communities, the loss in *infant life* is immense. The messenger (as is too often the case) was a mere child, and the information,

* "Let the ordinance of baptism, if possible, be always administered in the public congregation. And the Conference farther directs, that it be administered not at the close of the public service, but *before the sermon*; and, in general, that it be administered only to the children of our own members, and those of our regular hearers." *Private* administration is to be confined to "cases where children cannot be brought to the house of God, and where there are circumstances of great emergency, which will not allow the administration to be conveniently delayed."—*Grindrod's Compendium*, page 18.

consequently, more meagre than it ought to have been, under circumstances of great and (as the event proved) *extreme* urgency. Such a summons could scarcely have come less opportunely ; nevertheless, tearing ourselves from our endeared seclusion, we made hasty strides towards the part of the town indicated. The distance might be a mile, and the route was tortuous enough, terminating in a narrow court. Once in sight, we could perceive the particular dwelling of which we were in search, by the open door, and other symptoms of bustle and expectation. Our arrival had indeed been waited for in the most painful suspense ; for the poor infant had begun to die before the idea of sending for “ the nearest minister ” had been at all entertained. Rapidly entering the house, we found the object of our mission in the article of death ! nay, it was a question if it had not breathed its last sigh at the instant we crossed the threshold ! “ Poor lamb ! its gone ! ” decided more than one voice. “ Aye, it is,” burst from several others, with faces pendent, and tears streaming. “ Are you sure ? ” interposed a half-dissentient, whose hesitancy we were inclined to second, from a sincere wish to discharge the function (albeit without fee) which, with such expeditious steps, had brought us thither. It was indeed a problem which another minute might for

ever solve,—whether that tranquil clay were yet tenanted, or—

“Death had swifter wings than love.”

We took the advantage of a doubt ; and discerning a slight movement of the parted lips, we dashed the holy element over the passive head and closing lids, and pronouncing aloud the solemn words of the baptismal office, admitted into the living church one to whom, at the same moment, the portals of Heaven were thrown wide open ! By the time we had concluded a brief extempore prayer, the very last tie to mortality had been “ dissolved,” and the unconscious object of our ministration had been ushered into the presence of that Saviour, who hath so sweetly declared that “ of such is the kingdom of God.” (Luke, xviii, 16.)

Precision as to the address of parties applying for pastoral services is of the utmost importance;—whether as it regards economy of time, or the avoidance of mutual disappointment and vexation. Thousands of persons will admit (and with the least possible remorse) that they have “ the worst memory in the world for names ;” and to this general want, junior domestics in ministers’ families, to whom messages at the door are often confided, do not present an exception. You shall be duly apprised (when the messenger has gone !) that you are desired to go

and "pray by" such a person, in — street, (I've quite forgot the street, sir!) near to such a factory, sign, or opening; or it may even be in the country. All in vain may you cross-examine in order to elicit further references. Either you must sally forth on an expedition of discovery, or postpone the case for more ample directions, which, alas! (*if obtained*) may prove for ever too late!

One of the most galling chases to which were ever subjected, through a mal-direction, had to be endured one Sabbath morning! Scarcely had we risen, when a knock at the door of our dormitory startled us from the train of thought which, after a short night (as our Saturday nights, maugre every resolve to the contrary, almost always are) we were endeavouring to resume. We were informed that a child, born only an hour before, was expected to die "every minute;" and, consequently, required instant *baptism*.

The father brought the request; and the domestic, by whom it was reported, happened to be a thoughtful, experienced person. Scrupulously attentive to our "standing order" on that subject, she had requested the party to "describe" himself in full. Like many in other departments, both spiritual and secular, the good man was impatient of such "mere technicalities;" and, instead of allowing the servant to write down the few needful particulars, he had

cut the matter short by mentioning the *street only*; and (as a much better plan to prevent mistakes) he would himself "stand sentry" at the front of the court where he resided. A more "wooden" substitute for a succinct statement of the name, calling, street, court, and number, could scarcely have been invented than that which our unprofessional friend innocently, but perniciously, threw down; and, if the reader do not pity his ignorance, it will be because the entire stock in hand of that precious emotion will have been pre-judged in favour of ourself.

As a matter of willing duty we made all possible speed, and not ten minutes after the anxious applicant left our door, were on our way towards the spot where he had promised to station himself. No doubt he had returned to his little distressed habitation, without a minute's delay; and, learning that his poor babe not only still breathed, but appeared to be * "*bit better*," had, at the first impulse of fatigue, induced by the circumstances of the by-gone night, sat down and ensconced himself in a corner close to the fire. Here a degree of drowsiness overtook him, and he forgot his pastor as soon as the urgency of the case had somewhat abated. He might, or he might not, have been "caught napping" if we could have, by any means, ascertained where

* Northumbrian phrase for a *little*.

he lived. But "there (was) the rub" indeed! We were upon the pavement of *a long* narrow street, whose numerous inhabitants were in general yet asleep in their beds, and without any idea as to the part (whether towards the top or the bottom, on this side or the other) at which to commence our enquiries. Worst of all,—we had *no name* to give to any party whom we might meet with!

The town was Monkwearmouth; and, so far as regards the higher and modern part of it, few in the North will be found to surpass it in comfort and respectability. The compliment cannot, however, be extended to the old town, which consists of numerous streets irregularly sloping towards the quay side. Not only are the houses of an inferior description, but, owing to the number and poverty of the sea-faring population, by whom alone they are tenanted, each is sub-divided into numerous dwellings. You must ascend several stories, and reckon upon two or three distinct habitations at each landing, the interior of which may probably be found to consist of but a single room, with a mere partition.*

* We have the more reason to be acquainted with the confined and unhealthy locality referred to above, in consequence of having taken an appointment, in association with the Rev. J. FISHER, an estimable minister of the Scotch (Secession) Church, to visit *every* family in an extensive district, for purposes entirely spiritual and unsectarian. It was in conformity with an arrangement made by the local committee of the "Evangelical Alliance," which comprehended ministers of almost

Our first quarter of an hour was passed in promenading the rude causeway on either side, so as to ensure the challenge we momentarily expected from our self-appointed LOOK-OUT; but all bootless was that affectionate and laborious precaution.

"So let (not) the ports be guarded; keep your duties,
As I have set them down. If I do send, despatch

every denomination. Districts were judiciously apportioned, and the brethren were appointed "two by two," always of distinct congregations. The movement extended to "both sides of the water;" and 10,000 copies of an admirable Address, prepared by the Rev. William Horton, Wesleyan Minister, were distributed in as many families in the short space of three months. In the district to which it was the writer's happiness to be appointed, himself or colleague read the scriptures, and offered up a prayer, *in each house*, being about 200 in number. The name of the head of the family, the number of children, the place of worship (if any) which the family professed to attend, the Sabbath-school to which the children were sent, and other particulars, were all ascertained, and inserted in the schedule with which we had furnished ourselves. It was not uncommon for those who were visiting on one side of a street to come into exhilarating contact with brethren whose district embraced the one opposite. The surprise and joy of the members of our respective churches, when they saw their own beloved pastor in company with one of another congregation, coming under (what they thought) "their unworthy roof," must have been witnessed in order to be appreciated. Many were the sick whom we found on a "bed of languishing," whose friends had neglected to send for any minister, but whom it was *our* happy and seasonable task to counsel and comfort. Once a week the united pastorate of the entire place, minus only the———, met to rehearse their mutual toils; and, in reporting progress, one of us had not unfrequently to apprise another of the name and residence of some poor "backslider," who had acknowledged himself to have once belonged to the church of the latter, and whom it had been the endeavour of the two pastors who had visited him, to persuade immediately to "return" to his proper fold, and to "the Shepherd and Bishop of (his) soul." A considerable amount of good arose from this *Pastoral Confederacy and Crusade* against SIN, APATHY, AND BIGOTRY! With such a *sample* before us of the harmonious and beneficent working of united counsels, in order to the spread of "the common salvation," who will be so "evil affected" and *malapert* as to affirm that "the Alliance can lead to nothing practical?"

Those sentries to our aid ; the rest will serve
For a short holding ! If we lose the field,
 We cannot keep the town."

Sheer exhaustion, like the feigned music of Mercury, by which the first ARGUS was said to have been laid asleep, had decided the present position of the erewhile anxious, but now partly assured, father.

What was to be done ? Were we to return home forthwith ? Certainly ! insisted our first impulse. It may be a hoax ! Bah !!

But were we correct as to the street ? Yes, *there* was the broad type above us ; and two of one name were not to be imagined in so small a town. The morning was cold, so we felt bound to move about, and equally confident that it was no duty of ours to remain any longer in a position so unwonted and unworthy. Still, the question returned,—if it were no *duty*, might it not be an act of mercy ? Possibly there might have been some mistake on the part of the man himself, or in the reporting of his message ; or he might have found the babe so nearly gone, as to have been induced to leave the appointed spot, and retrace his steps towards our own residence, in the hope (however unnecessary) of stimulating our movements. There were more ways than one by which he might have missed meeting us ; and, with a father's heart of our own beating warmly

within us, we quite excused the supposed errantry of his pious zeal for his child's welfare, and took another stretch along the pavement. More precious minutes went; and some of the inhabitants had, by this time, risen, and here and there a blind was drawn up, or a door opened.

Now, from our school-days, we have always been wishful to prove old Virgil in error, in that one line of the *Æneid*, in which he characterizes the members of the sacred profession as—

————— “Genus irritabile vatum:” *

and not few have been our opportunities of confuting him from among the clergy, both of our own and other denominations, thousands of whom might truthfully take up that noble protestation of the great apostle,—“Therefore *I endure all things* for the elects' sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” (2 Tim. ii, 10.) So may it be with each member of the Christian pastorate!

“Be in *all* alike resigned!
Jesus' is a *patient* mind.”

Among many apt and valuable admonitions, on this subject, which might be quoted from the pens or lips of experienced divines, we remember one in particular which we heard, but a few years ago,

* The irritable race of the priesthood.

from a venerated minister in our own Conference. The occasion was when a senior, and otherwise worthy, brother was leaving his circuit, at the end of *one year*, on "remonstrance." Had this been a solitary instance during his itinerancy, the desired "change" might have passed in silence. Unhappily there had been several such; and as the objection had been the same in each instance, viz.—*extreme excitability of temper*, it was thought right to warn the *rising* pastorate against the indulgence of so dangerous an infirmity. Addressing those who were on the point of being "fully received," and others whose habit of feeling was not yet fully moulded, the very influential speaker above referred to said, with great emphasis,—“Take care of your *tempers* while you are *young*! as you grow older your trials will increase; and unless your minds and hearts have been gradually disciplined, as by “the patience of Jesus Christ,” under your minor exercises, you will find yourselves altogether disqualified to perform the *more exciting, and oft vexatious, duties* which are sure to await you in your future ministry, and more advanced years.” “*A word spoken in due season, how good is it!*” (Prov. xv, 23.)

It was (with us) no minor triumph of *pastoral patience* to be enabled, through grace, to endure so annoying a failure in punctuality, both as to time and place, on the part of an individual whom we

had never seen, and were sincerely seeking to serve. Besides, the early hours of a minister's Sabbath belong pre-eminently to the church, for whose general service it behoves him to be then closeted with his Divine Master, rather than wandering in the streets.

It now occurred to us that some of the neighbours might be able to furnish a clue to the case ; which dernier resort had not been hitherto available, on account of the non-conclusion of their slumbers. Here, however, the *namelessness* of the applicant proved a new perplexity. But the enquiry once started, several became interested in our mission ; and no little consultation took place from *open windows ! and opposite sides of the street ! !* as to who the party could be that required a service so peculiar at our hands. It shortly appeared that not a *matron* among them had any information respecting a *birth of recent date* in that part of the town.

We were in the act of turning upon our tired heel, and wishing these civil "women people" * good morning, when we espied a young man taking his stand at an "open," at some distance from where we stood. Rapid was our pace towards him, and his eye brightened at our approach. It was the individual whose non-appearance at his post, during the last half-hour, had occasioned so much toil and

* Northern idiom for the better sex.

confusion. On interrogating him as to the cause of his protracted alibi, he would have fain persuaded us that "he never thought of seeing us there *so soon!*" A little dubious, yet not *sullen*, we followed to his poor little domicile, and performed the sacred office required by his afflicted infant. It did not die that day! nor subsequently (that we ever heard of) during our stay in the circuit!! Probably it may be yet living; and if so, may it receive the blessing *in full* which, it is hoped and believed, might result from that *pastoral service extraordinary*, which marked its admission into "the bond of the covenant!"

In dismissing the topic of *private baptism*, we may adventure a hint to junior members of the pastorate, respecting a *prompt and exact registration* of the name of each infant whom they may be called, in this way, to receive into the Church. "Honour *all men!*" yea, let even the puniest and sickliest participant of both "the offence" and its omnipresent and glorious antidote,—"the free gift (which also) came upon *all men*," be distinguished by a name, "*written* among the living in Jerusalem." (Isaiah, iv, 3.) Besides, the child *may live* after all. It is not many months since we were applied to for a copy of the register of one who, *thirteen years* before, had been privately "named," (on the ground of supposed danger) but was now a youth, requiring the certificate of his birth and baptism.

Every pastor, in the course of his attendance upon the invalid members of his flock, will be certain to meet with individuals who will be desirous, and "worthy," of partaking (privately) of the Lord's supper. Protracted absence from "the gates of Zion" may well justify a pious yearning for whatever spiritual privileges may be consistently dispensed in the "dwellings of Jacob;" for the latter also "the Lord loveth." (Psalm lxxvii, 2.)

The directions prefixed to "the order for the communion of the sick," as used in the Church of England, contain one or two *principles* whose inherent wisdom may well commend them to general observance. "If," it is said, "the sick person be not able to come to the church, and yet is desirous to receive the communion in his house, then he must give timely notice to the curate, signifying, also, how many there are to communicate with him, (which shall be three, or two at least) and having a convenient place in the sick man's house, with all things necessary so prepared that the curate may *reverently minister*, he shall there celebrate the Holy Communion."

The "timely notice" demanded might be considered apposite to *every case* of affliction occurring in a congregation, as it would both supply the requisite information, and indicate an "*open door*." This ancient rule certifies the high standard of

common sense enjoyed by our ancestors, which, we regret to observe, has, in this matter, been supplanted by an unthrifty and desultory usage, that leaves the most urgent pastoral cases to ooze out as they best may, and would seem to require even itinerant pastors to be either always "*on change*," or remain ignorant of some of the most important statistics belonging to their sacred and benevolent vocation. Let "timely notice" then be given "*to the Curate*:" mere rumour is a *non-conductor*.

Neither is it unimportant for us to follow the same venerable authority, as to the selection of a few "*worthy*" fellow-communicants; in order to realize the beautiful idea, and cardinal doctrine, of "the communion" (MACKNIGHT, '*Joint Participation*,') "of the body and blood of Christ." (1 Cor. x, 16.) The same law of communication, or consociation, at the table of the Lord, is supposed to have been further alluded to in that felicitous expression, which occurs at a more advanced stage of the great apostle's continued argument respecting the unity of the church,—"*and have been all made to drink into one spirit.*" (1 Cor. xii, 13.) The learned commentator above quoted has the following note on this clause: "In supposing that the apostle, in this expression, alluded to the drinking of the cup in the Lord's supper, I have followed Theophylact, or rather the apostle himself, who

(chap. x, 17) makes the participation of the bread and wine in the supper, a symbol of the communicants being partakers of the same virtuous dispositions, and of the same means of increasing those dispositions, and of their sharing in the same hope of pardon." It is added,—“For the body is *not one* member but *many*.” (14v.) In vain then would a solitary recipient of the sacred elements look around for the appointed tokens of a kindred faith, and a mutual love. Nay, he cannot himself “*show forth* the Lord’s death,” to any such effect at least as he desires and yearns after! Let not then this precious *mystery* ever be denuded of its chosen witnesses,—its reciprocal pledges,—its social zest. “Where *two or three* are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them:” (Matt. xviii 20) and several hearts, drawn closer by the bond of sympathy in its more than wonted tension, cannot in vain be placed together upon that “altar which sanctifieth the gift.” Their *desires* after the Saviour become more vehement, as each enquires of the other,—“Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?” Their “*faith* groweth exceedingly,” as they support, corroborate, and assure each other. Their *love* mingles like the sweet odours of “ointment poured forth.” It may have been long prepared,—“tempered together, pure and holy,”—yet confined by the lid of an unfelt knowledge. But *now*! is a worthy occasion

for producing this precious, and divine, composition; and its treasures are, all at once, liberated, being "shed abroad in (each) heart," and pervading the place itself with a delightful, and well-nigh overpowering, element. Their *joy* in the Lord swells by concert, like many voices and harps in unison. Should the one suffering member be apparently near "the valley," the interposing "veil" becomes proportionably *thin*; and "the power of an endless life," testified of by lips destined, ere long, to be mute in death, is felt thrilling in the kindred bosoms of all present. Even "he that is feeble among them *at that day* shall be as David, and the house of David," (the most advanced in piety, and the mightiest in faith,) shall, *at this extraordinary season*, be carried far beyond themselves, and

"Trampling down sin, hell, and death,"

shall emulate the triumphs of "the Captain of our Salvation;" and employing His Name as the Watchword of Victory! shall be "as (the mouth of) God, as the angel of the Lord before them!" (Zeck. xii. 8.) And why should not the most blest of them all—the most richly anointed from on high,—the mightiest in faith, and most overwhelmed with joy,—be *the officiating Pastor himself*? For all such "labours of love," and "Pastoral services *extraordinary*," appear directly overshadowed by that most benignant

promise,—“He that watereth shall be watered also himself.” (Prov.xi, 25.)

How desirable it is that these select Eucharistic services should more generally illumine the believer's dying chamber! Nor is it esteemed, and beloved, members of the Church, who should be exclusively selected for this mark of Pastoral attention. Others may more imminently *need* prompt and compassionate aid in their last affliction. And if there be one class who, above all others, behove to be followed by the Shepherd, tracked to their sick rooms, and, when found, tenderly cherished, and plied with every restorative provided in the Gospel, it is that of *poor backsliders*. Saint Jude evidently refers to this unhappy, and oft neglected, class, and records a truly affecting plea for the use of the most energetic, yet discriminative, measures for their restoration. “And of some,” (he says,) “have compassion, making a difference. And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire!” (xxii. 3.) Now, we submit that *no backslider can be said to be formally, and properly, restored, who is not re-admitted to the Communion of the Church.*

In the autumn of 1847, we were induced to announce at a Society meeting in S——, the place of our residence, our earnest wish (as far as possible) to meet the claims of *the sick*, whether belonging to the Society in Congregation, including *any members of*

families in stated, or occasional, attendance on our ministry ; and, as it was a watering place, extending the overture to such invalid-visitors as might be of the Wesleyan persuasion, otherwise desirous of our services. Whilst, however, “magnifying,” and, as it were, advertizing, this part of our “office,” we were not less particular in requiring *the full address in writing* of every one whom we might be desired to call upon.

The announcement took effect. Not the least interesting applications were several presented on behalf of *visitors* ; who, confined to their lodgings, distant from their own Pastors, and requiring more than ordinary spiritual solace, were, above measure, glad to be attended by a Resident Minister of their own denomination.

. One of these was from the late Mrs. G. of ———, near Manchester ; an excellent leader in our Connexion ; and one whose deep piety, personal toils in the cause of God, and marked hospitality to his Ministers, together with the munificent contributions of herself and family, to the funds of Wesleyan Methodism ; rendered her one of the most worthy objects of Pastoral sympathy and attendance, to whom it was possible to have been introduced. We had several interviews with her, and experienced a high gratification in ministering to the spiritual comfort of one who had herself been “a succourer of many.” It

was not ordained that the salubrious air of S——, combined with the utmost medical skill, should arrest the progress of her complaint; and, in a few months after her return home, this inestimable lady was removed to that thrice happy world, in which she had long had her “conversation.”*

But the most beneficial consequence which resulted from this public tender of our pastoral services to the afflicted, was an introduction which it forthwith occasioned us to a Mr. R——, a *backslider*, and who, in the place of his former residence, had been a *leader* in our society. He had occupied a respectable station in life, having been a timber merchant, builder, &c., and had always borne an irreproachable character. Misfortunes had, however, lowered upon his declining years, and he was under the necessity of retiring into a more humble sphere. He removed to S——, and being a man of cultivated mind, was able to commence a school. In this comparatively obscure situation he was little known. Besides, the habits of watering places are peculiarly unfavourable to *introductions*, nor can even Wesleyan circles be quoted as any remarkable exception to this general social frigidity. We met with an instance in which a respectable widow-lady, who had been a member of society for thirty years in the

* To this necessarily imperfect reference to departed female excellence, of the highest order, we have only to add the endeared name of *Garstang*.

town from which she came, but who, after removing to S——, was allowed to attend the Wesleyan Chapel, and even to occupy a seat generally in the minister's pew, for several months, without being *once spoken to* by any one in or out of authority! And it was only by stress of spiritual "hunger" that she broke through this "stone wall" of a morbid exclusiveness, and made her own way into a private house, where she had heard that one of the classes was accustomed to meet. Unfortunately our friend, Mr. R., had come into the same chilling atmosphere, in a depressed state of mind as well as circumstances; and after in vain waiting for the "right hand of fellowship" to be volunteered towards him, he gradually gave way to the counsel of the great enemy, and made no effort to establish his claim even to private membership. Months, yea, *years*! rolled on; and whilst his excellent wife met regularly in class, he but left the fatiguing and ill-paid duties of each day, to sit down in a solitary corner of his dwelling, or pace the sullen and interminable shore, without one spiritual friend to assist to break the spell of darkness and unbelief by which he had become enthralled.

About the time of our arrival at S——, Mr. R. was attacked by the illness which was commissioned to take his life; and nothing could have been more opportune than the warm offer we were induced to

make, on the very first Sabbath evening on which we met our new flock,—of our unworthy services (*on application*) in all such cases.

The following forenoon brought a request (*in writing*) that we would call upon the sufferer, and we were not long in obeying it. We found the poor man confined to bed, and in much pain. The complaint began in one heel, and gradually extended to other parts of the system, resisting all the efforts of medicine; and, at his age, which was upwards of sixty, leaving little hope of recovery.* Our first interview with him convinced us that he was as “a bruised reed,” and as “smoking flax,” and, therefore, to be not “broken,” but sustained,—not “quenched,” but re-vivified. (Matt. xii, 20.) The restorative process had, indeed, more than commenced; and we directed him to anticipate a signal interposition of the Redeemer’s mercy and power on his behalf, even “judgment unto victory!”—the consummate display of the “healing art” of the Good

* We believe the name of this distressing complaint to be NEURALGIA. But a few weeks ago a youth, residing at Ocker-hill, in this circuit,—not quite 15 years of age, but of deep piety, and more than ordinary promise,—was attacked by it, and in one week became its victim! The event has plunged a large circle into deep sorrow, in which a Pastor, who took great interest in him, may be permitted to unite. Would that the bereaved parents of this beloved youth might derive but a small measure of consolation from this sympathetic, and tributary, allusion to the fate and virtues of GEORGE EYNON. He died January 19, 1856. “*The days of his youth hast THOU shortened!*”—(Psalm lxxxix, 45.)

Physician upon his "sin-sick soul;" the glad termination of all his

"Sorrows, and sins, and doubts, and fears;"

and the final "bruising of Satan under (his) feet." Thrice welcome were these divine cordials to his drooping spirits; and soon the name of Christ appeared to resume its ancient power over his entire feelings and character. He that "hateth putting away," receives with *a kiss* each returning prodigal; as though He had reserved the exuberance of His mercy for the most rebellious; and the most abundant tokens of His pardoning love for those who, by a wanton prodigality, have forfeited their spiritual inheritance. It was thus that the voice of "the trumpet throughout the land" of Israel was appointed to usher in, with loudest gratulations, "the year of jubilee." (Lev. xxv, 9.) Who can sound the depth of the divine affection towards the unhappiest class of offenders?—the self-banished! self-destroyed! "twice-dead!" "I will heal their backsliding, (saith the Lord): I will love them *freely*." (Hosea, xiv, 4.) "At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you *a name and a praise* among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord." (Zeph. iii, 20.)

Each successive visit to *the backslider's* sick room evidenced the genuineness of his repentance, and the

rapidly increasing preparation of his heart to receive the Saviour, *once more and for ever*, in all his offices. Although "the light that was in him," and which, in the discharge of his beneficent office of class-leader, had often cheered and directed the path of others, had become "darkness," it was now seen to revive, as the inspiring ray of divine mercy

"Pierced the gloom of sin and grief,"

and fell, in all its pristine energy, upon his susceptible and longing spirit. It was truly a fine spectacle for his family and friends, and, not least, for his Pastor, to behold him once more "light in the Lord."

Of all "the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," vouchsafed in the course of our attendance upon this restored backslider, the one best remembered was when, according to arrangement, we administered to him *the tokens of the Saviour's dying love*.

Besides two "worthy" communicants belonging to his own family, and one or more of their select friends, we took with us *one of the class-leaders*, with whom we negotiated for the immediate entry of the sick-man's name into his class-book. It is no merely traditional importance which, as Wesleyans, we attach to the formal record of church-membership. When at the first outpouring of the

Spirit, it is said "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be (Wesley—'as *were*') saved," (Acts, ii, 47,) we deem each word of the passage emphatic and prescriptive; and feel compelled to regard the very statistics of the primitive church as an "ordinance of God." The unparalleled rapidity of the spirit's work, in the conversion of sinners, was traced by the triumphant eye of the glorified Redeemer; who, in infinite wisdom and complacency, ordained an *enrolment* of his visible church, which should constitute a perfect duplicate of "*The Book of Life*." Nor ought any of "*the saved*" ever to remain unconnected with the church. "Of ZION it shall be said, This and that man was *born in her*!" (Psalm lxxxviii, 5.) And we may impropriate the name and charter of the ancient "city of God" upon the ever widening domain of the spiritual church, embracing each scene of true conversion, and each birth-place of precious souls. Of such are *the chambers of affliction*, to which the Christian Pastor, and his devoted co-adjutors, are so often dispatched, like Ananias to the place where Saul of Tarsus lay prostrate, and in which (as in his case) "*the scales*" have fallen from many "*eyes*." (Acts ix, 18.) If sickness be so frequently signalized by evangelical penitence, and a saving change, until then deferred and disregarded; and by "grace abounding to the chief of sinners;" why may not

these happy results be certified, as in other cases, by a visible union with the people of God, and (as far as circumstances will allow) by "a good profession before many witnesses?"

The return of *the Prodigal* was deemed worthy of celebration in proportion to the destitution and misery from which he had escaped. And when painful and dangerous illness has occasioned any careless sinner, or *poor backslider*, to "come to himself," and to "arise and go to (his) Father;" then ought the rapturous embrace with which we are assured that All-merciful Father has received him, and the loud and long gratulations of the heavenly hosts, whose simultaneous delight is enkindled because they "do always behold HIS FACE," to stimulate the church on earth to co-jubilant demonstrations. Where is the "elder brother" who will refuse to go in?" It would seem that his staid qualities need divesting of their sternness; and his self-esteem, and *class*-evangelism, rectifying by a more assimilating sense of the sovereign, and illimitable, mercy of our common Parent. (Luke xv, 32.)

"How art THOU pleased by bounty to distress!
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
Too big for birth! to favour and confound!
To challenge, and to distance, all return!
Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,
And leave praise panting in the distant vale!"

Night Thoughts.

It was a memorable forenoon indeed ! when by “the communion of the body and blood of Christ,” and the presentation of the usual token of Wesleyan membership, poor Mr. R. was at once re-admitted within the pale of the universal church, and that of his own people in particular. In the course of the service we sung a verse, the prayer of which was now, after a long alienation, happily fulfilled :—

“Tell me, or thou shalt never go,
Thy prayer is heard, it shall be so !
 The word hath passed thy lips, and I
 Shall with thy people live and die.

In less than a month afterwards *the restored* was for ever united to the blood-washed multitude before the throne !

If “timely notice” has been so properly enjoined, whenever any one “is *desirous* to receive the communion in his house,” it is scarcely less needful to give previous intimation to *the family* of the proposed communicant, when the overture may come from an affectionate Pastor himself ; in order that “having a convenient place in the sick-man’s house, with all things necessary so prepared, the Curate may *reverently minister*.” Not unfrequently have we found considerable difficulty in obtaining a supply of *sacramental wine* ; more especially when the parties have been poor, and there has been no “well-beloved

Gaius," (as generous as affluent) resident in the vicinity. In all dubious cases, enquiry should be made as to the means by which the Lord's table may be furnished; and in the absence of private resources, a claim may be legitimately presented to the *Poor-Steward* of the nearest society.

Testimonials to Pastors have been for some time in vogue; and where they represent the spontaneous and united affection of pious and grateful hearts, and are *not the result of some unhappy division, and bitter partisanship*, they cannot be too highly valued. The only thing of the kind with which we were ever favoured was in the form of A POCKET COMMUNION SERVICE. The donors were two gentlemen, both resident at D———, near Manchester. Besides an acquaintance of three years, we had been called to perform a Pastor's part towards each of them, under circumstances of domestic *visitation* of extreme severity. One lost, in consumption, two amiable and accomplished daughters, of the ages of nineteen and twenty-one, in the course of one short summer! Neither of them had enjoyed religion previous to her last affliction: but the elder, who was the first removed, sought it "as for hidden treasure," and found it to the joy of her soul. Her dying testimony was the most powerful that can be conceived, and proved a means of spiritual good to numbers. The writer endeavoured

to improve her decease in a *sermon to the young*, which happened to be delivered on her birth-day ! The following note, relative to these affecting occurrences, was made shortly afterwards :—

“ The congregation was one of the largest that ever assembled in that place of worship ; and a deep and thrilling sense of the solemn realities of the last judgment appeared to penetrate, and pervade, both minister and audience. *Several young persons* began, from that night, earnestly to prepare for an eternal world. Among those of the bereaved relatives present, was *her only sister*, whose health, like her own, had for some time been seriously affected, and who is now evidently, and very rapidly, following the companion of her childhood and youth to the same premature grave ! But the Lord is with *her* as He was with her departed sister ; and soon they shall “ walk ” together “ with Him in white, for (through the blood of the Lamb) they are worthy ! ” August 9, 1844.

Many were the journeys we took to that “ house of mourning,” and to the “ bed of languishing,” occupied by the two lovely sisters in succession ; and arduous was the “ travail ” of our soul “ until Christ was formed in ” them. Our ample recompense was, that each “ gladly received the word,” and became “ wise unto salvation.”

The mother of these young ladies, who had now no daughter left, and was herself a constant invalid, must have sunk under these rapid and fiery trials, had she not sought and found the support of the All-sufficient ! It was a satisfactory addition to our

pastoral duties to receive her into church-fellowship, (as had been the case with both of her daughters,) and to establish a *class in the house*, composed chiefly of those who had been aroused to spiritual concern, by the thrilling dispensations which had befallen the family.

The other party to our valuable and appropriate *testimonial*, was a gentleman whose enterprising labours in the "vineyard" of Methodism, and cordial affection towards its ministers, in addition to his superior literary taste, had ensured him a high place in our esteem. *Scarlatina* was permitted to enter his family, and, in little more than a fortnight, to sweep away *two* of his beloved offspring ! Of course we were on the spot, and essayed the part of "a son of consolation."

It is in scenes like these,

"Where faith turns wild, and thought too weak to think,"

that the sympathy and prayers of a Christian Pastor are appreciated like the services of a skilful pilot in a storm. Ever afterwards is he linked with *the eras* of life, and regarded as an embodiment of the fadeless hopes, and imperishable joys, which it was his privilege to minister to the departing, and surviving, at "*the closing scene.*"

It wanted but a week of the time of our removing from Manchester, when we received an invitation

from one of the above gentlemen to spend an evening at his house. Valedictory services, parties, &c., (not to mention the ponderous item of removal preparations) had all but exhausted the remnant of our evenings; yet were we loath to refuse a call, which arose (as we well knew) from friendship of a far more than ordinarily tender description. To seal the mandate, it was added that Mr. and Mrs. F. (the other bereaved parties) together with Mr. W. B———, the leader of the new class,—a blessed man! whom, on account of his ever-jubilant character, we were wont to prenominate “a member of the Church Triumphant!” had engaged to meet us. We therefore wrought hard until omnibus time; and when, according to arrangement with our affectionate host, who came to town daily, the vehicle stopped at our door, were ready for the journey. Mr. ———, whose spirits never flagged, was, as usual, the life of all about him; nor was it the first time that we had found the exercise of a friend’s *gift* a pleasant holiday for our own.

The parties invited were all punctual. Once within his own dome, our generous host was no monopolist of time, but delighted to listen and learn. Allusions to the past were unavoidable, and compelled the dew of grief, or sympathy, to stand in every eye. The two bereaved mothers wept much, recalling, as they did, more aptly perhaps than the

other sex, those riven bonds of their respective hearts and homes, which, to them and theirs, had been the all-absorbing events, as they had called forth the most assiduous functions, of our now closing pastorate.

Time flew, and we became mindful of the distance we had to walk to *the train*, by which we had to return. We were in the act of proposing a parting chapter, prayer, &c., when up rose Mr. ———, and commenced a speech! The exordium consisted of allusions to our unworthy labours as a Pastor, such as we cannot quote. They were dictated by the limitless gratitude of the fondest of fathers. Deep feeling in the breast of the speaker forbade enlargement, and he glided as rapidly as possible to the main topic of his address, viz., "*the communion of the sick*;" which consoling and hallowing solemnity had been administered to the younger of his lamented daughters, and only prevented in the case of the other by her rapid and unexpected demise. We deemed the sentiments of our friend, on this subject, alike creditable to his judgment and feelings; but up to that moment had not the slightest conception of the finale to which all this unwonted formality was about to lead.

The speaker now adverted to the extreme difficulty and embarrassment, which, from some casual and (we had supposed) forgotten, conversation, he had

understood we had experienced in this branch of our pastoral service *among the poor*, for want of what the rubric calls "all things necessary so prepared." To enable us to meet all such emergencies in future, he produced an elegant and costly silver service, comprising chalice, flagon, and salver, "cunningly" devised for the pocket; and, in the name of himself and friend, entreated our acceptance of it as a tribute of respect and affection; at the same time recording his fervent prayer, that the sacred ministration to which the gift should be appropriated, might prove a blessed medium of divine consolation to numbers of "the (sick) poor of Christ's flock," in our subsequent spheres of labour. Mr. F—— followed in excellent taste; and after such a response as we were able to command, a select portion of scripture was read, a parting hymn raised, and we poured forth our souls together at the throne of grace and love. The last of these exercises was conducted by our "triumphant" friend, B——. Thus terminated one of the most godly *farewell* evenings which ever sealed, and comforted, *the close* of our ministry and pastorate. The time would have been too short to reach the train, had not our affectionate host anticipated our wants by ordering a cab to take us from his door.

Independently of the beautiful *souvenir* which, with so much grace and liberality, the representatives

of these two families placed in our hands, a Pastor's memory must often return to scenes like the above.

During the almost four years which have since elapsed, we have been called *to prove* the potency of those divine consolations which it was our endeavour "freely" to administer to these deeply-bereaved parents. Nor has the result in the least diminished our confidence in that ever precious, and oft-unsaid word, "My grace is sufficient for thee!" (2 Cor. xii, 9.) Instead of sounding, in solitary anguish, the depths of the heart's "*own bitterness*," let us rather appropriate those immeasurable benefits with which these all-wise dispensations are, and shall be for ever, teeming, both to the departed and ourselves; and which shall constitute "a well-spring" of "*joy*" with which "a stranger doth not intermeddle." (Prov. xiv, 10.)

"Descend, blest Faith! dispel the hopeless care,
And chase the gathering Phantoms of despair;
Tell that the flow'r, transplanted in its morn,
Enjoys bright Eden!
Tell, that when mounting to her native skies,
By death releas'd *the parent spirit* flies;
There shall *the child*, in anguish mourn'd so long,
With rapture hail her, 'midst the cherub throng;
And guide her pinion, on exulting flight,
Thro' glory's boundless realms, and worlds of living light!"
Heman's "Domestic Affections."

No section of the church of Christ possesses a *Pastoral Economy* of equal variety and extent to that which the sacrificial genius of *Wesley* bequeathed to his "sons in the gospel."

The Quarterly Visitation of the Classes is altogether a peculiarity, engrossing five, or in some instances, even six, weeks each. *Wesleyan Pastors* are thus required, during *half their lives*, to supplement a more than average amount of pulpit toil, by an anxious and exciting order of duties, unknown to either the Episcopalian, Congregational, or Presbyterian economies. If, however, *we* are, in this respect, "in labours more abundant" than others, it were devoutly to be wished that every branch of the Christian Pastorate could rejoice in Wesleyan facilities for a periodical re-enactment, and "*succession*," of the true, apostolic visitation of the churches. How plainly prescriptive of some such personal examination of the religious experience, and habitual deportment, of each member of our respective flocks, is that passage in 1 Acts, xv. 36 : "And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see how they do* :"—"How their souls prosper ; how they grow in faith, hope, love : what else ought to be the grand and constant inquiry, in every eccle-

siastical visitation?" (*Wesley's Notes, in loco.*)*

The *glory* of these stated visitations of the Leaders and their classes, by the Pastors of the Church, is, undoubtedly, *Christian simplicity*. Whether few, or numerous, each is appealed to in rotation, as was Peter by that all-searching, yet benignant, interrogation,—“Lovest thou me?” Conventional status,—mental calibre,—personal intimacy, &c., are all necessarily merged in an avowed and admitted scrutiny of the heart. “Knowing no man after the flesh,” it is an understanding that, during a brief and solemn pause, the mirror of the Gospel shall be held up to every face; and what each sees himself to be, he is at liberty to testify. *Disguise* would not repay itself, any more than a falsification of symptoms by a patient to his physician would realize the object for which advice was sought. A vessel carrying an unlawful cargo would be far more likely to escape by flight, or by the exhibition of an independent or hostile flag, than by hoisting colours which, by express treaty, admit “a right of search.” *Silence*,

* In no publication, that has fallen in our way, is that part of the Wesleyan economy which relates to class meetings, more strenuously recommended than in a volume entitled “JETHRO,” the production of a talented, and now too well-known Independent minister. The division of the people into classes; the appointment of leaders; and the superadded oversight of the Pastorate; are all ingeniously, and unanswerably, advocated, by the aid of an inspired counterpart, taken from the organisation of the Israelites, for judicial purposes, by Moses, in compliance with the admirable counsel of his father-in-law. (*Exodus* xviii. 17, 26.) Wesleyan Methodism was then “a word of beauty,” with the present Editor of the *British Banner*!

too, is not merely a non-profession, but (unless under extreme timidity, or non-age) is equivalent to a negation of "*the blessing*."

The truth is that, above the lowly door-way of the Wesleyan class-meeting, as above the portals of the proud mercantile, or industrial establishment, there is virtually inscribed—"No admittance except on business!" And both the stated Leader, and the visiting Pastor, bring with them that plain *canon* for their faithful, but affectionate, procedure: "Be ready always to give an answer, to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." (1 Peter, iii, 15.)

After an experience in *visitations* of more than twenty years, among the "tens of thousands of (our) Israel," the writer can depone that he has seldom met with an attempt at mystification, or had to "cross-examine" in order to elicit the truth.

Matter for yet louder pastoral triumph may be derived from *the high evangelical standard of religious experience*, acknowledged among the Wesleyan societies, and actually attained by the great majority of their members and officers. The Leaders especially may be cited as being, with few exceptions, unfaltering in their profession of justifying faith, clear as the noon-day sun as to their personal acceptance "in the Beloved," and going on to perfection.

Never can we forget the lucid testimonies which, from quarter to quarter, we have been wont to hear from the lips of these "chief men" of the people; and glad should we often have been to exchange places with them, and "sit at (their) feet."

The rapturous experience of one of these blessed men, related, however, not in his class, but on his sick-bed, when we took him his quarterly ticket, will be deemed appropriate to our present topic.

His name was *Harper*, and he resided at Little-over, near Derby. For forty years he had been in Society, and during more than half that period a Leader. He occupied a small farm, and was much respected in the neighbourhood. The preaching was held upon a part of his premises, and his house was the home of the ministers.

On one occasion (it was the good old man's birthday, we believe) he assembled all *the aged poor* with whom he was acquainted, and provided them a beautiful dinner; at the close of which, he presented each of them with the sum of one shilling. We attended by special invitation, in order (to use his own affecting phrase) that we might "give a word of exhortation to those who had one foot in the grave!" Three or four came on crutches, one was stone-blind, and several were widows. They were exactly twelve in number, and their united ages amounted to nine hundred and fifty-two, averaging

almost fourscore each! The idea had been implicitly taken from Luke, xiv. 12, 14; and it were well indeed, if the *parties* which the rich give to one another, and the expense lavished in *recherché* dishes and champagne, upon those who "have more than heart can wish" at their own tables, were superseded by deeds of benevolence like the above. Our esteemed friend enjoyed a god-like luxury in ministering to the bodily wants of these poor, and almost forgotten persons, the majority of whom were of "the household of faith." Either he, or his equally excellent wife, (I forget which) declared that they had "never spent such a happy day since their *wedding day*!"

The affliction, which was suffered to fall upon this exemplary man, was one of the most painful that ever came under our notice. It was *cancer in the mouth*! and after insidious advances for several years, and one or more temporary cures, or checks, such as surgical skill could interpose, the terrible disease at length broke out with resistless force. Terrible! it was, both as to its unsightly and revolting effects upon

"—— The human face divine;"

and as to the slow martyrdom, which it inflicted upon a naturally vigorous constitution. The lines of Addison, on this fell disorder, are as accurate as they are elegant:—

“ As when a cancer on the body feeds,
 And gradual death *from limb to limb* proceeds ;
 So does the chilness to each vital part
 Spread by degrees, and creeps into the heart.”

It was within a few months of the termination of our third year in the circuit, when, being appointed to meet the class of this suffering saint, he was unable to take his wonted place. Deep was the sympathy of the members, by whom he was justly regarded as a Father in Christ, and several of whom were nearly related to him. Nor was the pastor less affected than his “little flock.” To ask for *life*, under remediless suffering, was all but impossible; and conscious of this beloved Leader’s complete meetness for his final change, the cry of one and all was, “Cut short (thy) work in righteousness!”

“ Jesus ! Master ! seal (his) peace,
 And take (him) to thy breast.”

This affecting meeting over, we hastened with the dear sufferer’s *ticket* in hand to his bed-side. Of late, his visitors had been few ; as the dearer he was to his friends, the more were they overcome by the ravages of the disease upon his once lovely features. A pastor’s eye and nerves become (at least) semi-professional ; and with comparatively little of that nausea of which others complained *for days afterwards*; we were able, from time to time, to perform

our duty at this trying scene. Presenting him with the token of church fellowship, we inquired tenderly after his state of mind. "The candle of the Lord was bright upon (his) head;" and he met our inquiry with first a look of peace, and then "a gust of praise!" Not few were the points in his experience on which he dwelt, all conveying the assurance that he was "in Christ,"—perfectly resigned to his sufferings,—and lost in the will of God. He concluded by saying, (and it were well if more could aver the same)—"This is the first time since I joined Society, forty years ago, that I have been absent from my class, when tickets have been renewed. And now, bless the Lord! I know that, if I never receive another ticket, *I shall receive A CROWN!!!*" Thrice happy *parallel* between the *sign* of membership in the church, and the spirit's *seal* upon the heart! Yet more triumphant *contrast* between the two tokens; the one *a ticket* delivered by his unworthy and sympathising pastor, on a "bed of languishing," and in a vile tabernacle; the other *A CROWN!!!* to be bestowed by his meritorious and complacent Saviour and Judge, in the realms of bliss, and "clothed upon with (the) house which is from heaven." On taking our leave of the family, Mrs. H. repeated the last opinion of the doctor, which was that "*he was kept alive by the tranquillity of his mind!*" When we removed from

the circuit, he still lived; but shortly afterwards, "departed to be with Christ, which is far better."

Such, in general, are the men, (aye, and women too) who sustain the office of Leaders in our Connexion; sound in the faith, "abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost," and with "the anointing oil" of grace and heaven upon their heads. And *they* give the key-note to the members, who, as to the vast majority, imbibe the spirit, and are partakers of the joy, of those who are over them in the Lord.

The progress of a *visitation*, extending over both our home and foreign stations, conducted in upwards of twenty different languages, and leading every where through joyful crowds of saved, and grateful, people, might almost claim for its type the career of the chiefest of the apostles, in which he is heard to exclaim—"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph IN CHRIST, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place." (2 Cor. ii, 14.) The number of members constituting the English, Irish, and American connexions, is stated in the last returns to be 1,669,085; while that of the pastorate amounts to 6542. Ever! ever! may "the shout of a King (be) heard among them!"

A remarkable *Incident* which occurred in connexion with our discharge of this part of a Wesleyan

Pastor's duty, merits publicity. We were then stationed in M——, and the class in question was what is termed a "Ladies' class." So far as this * *sobriquet* denotes an unmixed meeting it may be sufficiently perspicuous ; but it is always desirable, in Wesleyan fellowship, to "avoid the very appearance" of *caste*. The "rich faith" of the "chosen poor" may supply an invaluable stimulus to the oft slower *hearts* of their superior in station ; while the former may be almost as largely advantaged in their *minds* by stated intercourse with persons of greater intelligence and refinement. When "the rich and poor (thus) *meet* together," the one may cultivate the grace of condescension, and the other be delivered from the temptation to envy ; the former may take lessons in gratitude, and the latter be consoled by sympathy : "the brother of low degree (may) rejoice," even under the most obvious disparity of worldly circumstances, so long as he has "the Lord" for his "portion," through which he is indeed "exalted !" and "the rich" be induced to covet, and appropriate, the same blood-bought and enduring inheritance, without which he must be for ever "brought low !" And why should not this association, in the ways of God, of those who "abound," and those who "suffer want," furnish an ever-welcome occasion for "drawing out (the) soul" of the one towards the necessities of the other ? So

* Conventionalism, or by-name.

that by "communicating with each other," as concerning "giving and receiving," (Phil. iv, 15.) the archetypal beauty of the religion of Love may still be found irradiating the church; and by a practical adaptation of an irrevocable principle, "they that believe (may yet have) *all things common!*" (Acts, ii, 44.)

The class above referred to, although entirely composed of females, with a female leader, was not of that exclusive character to which we object: its small number presented several varieties of condition. The hour of meeting was eleven in the forenoon, and nearly all were present. After the opening hymn and prayer, we commenced a brief address, in the course of which, besides detailing our own experience, we proposed that if any one present wished for spiritual advice, *on any particular topic*, we should gladly give it to the utmost of our power. The object was to induce greater confidence in their Pastor; to elicit more fully their existing trials, difficulties, and attainments; to supersede that routine-phraseology, which is so barren of point and individuality; and to afford scope for a personal application of precious and seasonable truth.

It will be obvious that this slight variation from the ordinary forms of a categorical examination may be most easily carried out when (as in this case) there are but few present, and those are of established piety, and superior intelligence.

The Leader happened to be a personal friend of ours, and very obligingly set the example by adverting to that which was uppermost in her own mind, viz.—*the welfare of her children*. That topic once started, nearly every member in the class followed with a similar statement. They, too, were mothers, with children and young people growing up around them; and it was laid upon all their hearts to submit the duties and cares of their momentous position, for pastoral advice, and mutual counsel. We endeavoured to perform our part of the duty earnestly and faithfully; adverting, as occasion offered, to instruction, discipline, non-indulgence, example, mutual confidence, intercession, &c.

Little could he have observed of the workings of society, and even that little he must have forgotten, who could have regarded this select company of *pious mothers* with indifference. *There* were the tender and the valiant, whose relation to their offspring, from the beginning, is one of pain endured, and forgotten; whose love is the sole endowment of infancy, and being not more pure than perennial, kindles to greater efforts on behalf of its objects as years, circumstances, and *numbers*, evolve its energies, and amplify its sphere. In RELIGION, all history proclaims the triumphs of maternal instrumentality, so as to justify the eloquent encomium of

the late Dr. McALL, in his admirable sermon on "Parental Duties," in which he says,—“The fact is certain, that the instructions of such a mother” (as he has previously described) “are, in innumerable instances, productive of more valuable and permanent results than all other forms of instrumentality together. And I doubt not that, at the last day, they will be confessed to have been rivalled, in the magnitude of their effects, only by the actual proclamation of the gospel, and the dissemination of the holy scriptures.”

Such were those to whom our best counsels were tendered relative to this momentous part of “woman’s mission;” and, after singing one or more appropriate verses, we prostrated ourselves at the footstool of mercy, and found “the spirit of grace and supplication” eminently pleading in each heart, on behalf of the objects which, during the meeting, had so profitably occupied our attention.

While we were on our knees, a widely different scene presented itself at the residence of one of these excellent ladies, viz.—the Leader of the class. A RABID DOG was seen running along the street, and when it reached the iron gate in the front of the house, it suddenly deviated from its onward course, and attempted to force its way between the palisades. Not able to effect this, the determined animal next leaped the gate, and, bounding towards the



"The Leader set the example by adverting to that which was uppermost in her own mind, viz.—the welfare of her children."



"Deliver my darling from the power of the dog."
(Psalm xxii, 20.)

front door, commenced *pawing* violently against it. The only parties, at the time, in the house, were the infant and a young nurse-girl; and the latter supposing that some one was knocking at the door, without further consideration opened it; when in rushed the rabid creature! open-mouthed and desperate! The frightened girl, whom the beast providentially passed without touching, retreated with her charge into the nearest room, and shut herself in. The dog, meeting with no opposition, proceeded up stairs, and after entering (as is supposed) several rooms, reached the highest story, and mounted the bed, which stood in the most distant corner.

The above had been the work of a few minutes; but the condition and career of the deadly intruder had not been unnoticed; and an alarm being raised, two men followed him into the house, and tracked him to the spot described, where they found him foaming and raging against the head of the bed. Being provided with clubs, they quickly dispatched him.

By far the most strikingly providential circumstance was, that of *six children*, all young and defenceless, the only one in the house should have been the infant! Two or three were at school, and the rest were under the care of a relative in the immediate neighbourhood. Another quarter of an

hour, and they would have been *all about* ! pursuing their amusements in the adjacent grounds, or gathering towards the dinner table. Had that been the case, it would have been next to impossible *for them all* to have escaped the mortal tooth of the rabid monster, which had so abruptly taken possession of their dwelling.

Picture the return of the mother from class, with the love of her offspring both augmented and refined, by the singularly appropriate exercises which she had just quitted ; and a portion of the spiritual blessing, which she had been supplicating for them, resting upon herself, to be hereafter transmitted by her example and influence. The tragic occurrence which had transpired within her domestic sanctuary, during her brief absence, was rapidly related ; and as she beheld the danger past, and her beloved ones all safe and joyous, it were not to be wondered that she regarded their deliverance as an immediate and signal answer to those prayers, in which herself, her class, and their pastor, were, *at that very moment*, uniting. Might it not, also, be received by us all as an ample earnest of the "*the great salvation !*" which, as co-suppliants, we had been importuning on behalf of the whole of our endeared offspring ?

The official meetings of the Wesleyan Connexion are usually conducted by one of the Pastorate ; and respecting this part of our economy the following

judicious observation; in the justly celebrated *Liverpool Minutes*, deserves to be quoted :—

“ Let us not forget that we are under solemn obligations to conduct ourselves, on such occasions, not as the mere chairmen of public meetings, but as the Pastors of Christian Societies, put in trust by the ordinance of God, and by their own voluntary association with us, with the scriptural superintendence of their spiritual affairs, and responsible to the Great Head of the Church for the faithful discharge of the duties of that trust.”—(*Minutes of Conference*, 1820.)

The most frequent (and we are inclined to rank as the most important) of these, are *Leaders' meetings*.

The great desiderata of these meetings are a *more numerous attendance, and an augmented spirituality*. It is highly probable that the former of these would be best promoted by the latter. So long as the principal errand of a Leader is to pay his money, he will be inclined to remain away from the meeting fully as often as to attend it, simply for the purpose of economising time. But let it be understood that there will be spiritual business, and spiritual men will be attracted to the Board as to a means of grace. Finance may be soon despatched, in order to which it has been found advisable to fix the time at which the Society-accompts shall close. The poor having been relieved, a *list of sick persons, requiring pastoral visitation*, should be next taken ; after which it may be seriously asked—Is there *any thing* that can be

enrolment of new converts, and an increasing staff of responsible and working officers, will alone shew *the actual and permanent gains* arising from our stated instrumentality; or realized in "times of" extraordinary "refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

By all means, then, let the spirit of enterprise be maintained in our Leaders' meetings; and let the fire of piety and zeal, instead of smouldering beneath the ashes of a superincumbent *finance*, be constantly fanned by pastoral energy. Each Leader may then go forth as a "flame of fire" among his members. And *official intercourse*, instead of proving (as it too frequently does) a spiritual blight, may become the hot-bed of faith and love, in which the spiritual graces of Pastors, and their co-adjutors, may visibly and signally advance, and (like "the grapes of Esheol,") may excite the desires and efforts of an admiring and emulative people.

It is to Leaders' meetings in their corporate capacity, and to select members of this invaluable body, that a Wesleyan Pastor may confidently look as his chief and willing auxiliaries in the work of pastoral visitation.

In referring to the "standing orders" of a Leader's meeting, we have mentioned that of supplying *lists of sick members*, which we take to be the palpable meaning of that clause in the Rules of the Society:—

“It is his” (the Leader’s) “business to meet the Ministers and the Stewards once a week, to inform the Minister of any that are sick.”

The best method of fulfilling this highly important duty, which the writer ever met with, was at Bradford, in Yorkshire; where, previous to his being stationed in a circuit, he was called to spend a short time as a supply for his own beloved father. *The Secretary* of the meeting enquired of each Leader,—Have you any sick persons in your class? On receiving a reply in the affirmative, he made an entry of the name, with other needful particulars, into a book properly ruled for the purpose. In case of poverty being combined with affliction, suitable relief was granted, and the amount entered in connexion with the name. The book was then deposited with the Minister for the week, and he engaged to visit the cases at his leisure. The grants made to the sick poor were also placed in his hands for distribution. As nearly as we can recollect, the columns in the book were as follows:—

NAME.	RESIDENCE.	LEADER'S NAME.	SUM GRANTED.	BY WHOM VISITED.
John Simpson	Cross Street	J. Thompson	2s.	B. S.
Mary Giles	108, Kirkgate	W. Whitaker	B. S.
Widow Jones	76, Bell's Row	J. Blackburn	1s.	B. S.

Furnished with this directory, and not a little elated with our vice-pastorship, we sallied forth on the following day to fulfil our commission; and we need scarcely add that, notwithstanding our extreme youth, we were cordially received. For our own part, we derived much edification from our intercourse with the eight or ten afflicted members of Christ's flock, to whom this our first attempt at pastoral visitation was the means of introducing us. A young gentleman also, who accompanied us, and had been suffering much from mental depression, appeared singularly revived by the instances of comforting and supporting grace which he had the privilege of witnessing; and the devotional exercises in which he was permitted to unite.

We cannot too strongly impress the duty of furnishing these lists of the sick at the Leaders' meetings; and a book, of the kind described, is infinitely preferable to a fugitive paper, which may be unnoticed, or lost. Absent Leaders should be held responsible for the transmission of the names of their sick members to the Board *in writing*.

The above is not, however, the only way in which Leaders may be made auxiliary to Pastors, in the work to which these pages are devoted. Most of this excellent and assiduous order would cheerfully accompany a Pastor, at stated periods, to the houses of their members. And *one* affectionate offer of the

kind, followed by a definite arrangement, will do more to secure the desired end than all the complaints, both loud and deep, in which some love to indulge. But be sure to have *actual appointments*; for to nothing is that old adage more applicable than to pastoral overtures,—that “*any time is no time.*”

One of the most effective of these pastoral co-adjutors, with whom we ever had the happiness to be associated, was Mr. J—— G—— of M——. He had been one of the wildest of characters before his conversion; and having had “much forgiven, (he), therefore, *loved much!*” During two days of the week this excellent man had few demands in the way of business; and at such times he was always at our service. Having two very large classes of his own, and an extensive acquaintance in the Society, there was no lack of cases, (whether of the sick or sound) requiring our attendance. Dressed in the neatest costume of his calling, (which was that of a butcher) and his face shining like the sun, he was wont to wait our arrival, and accompany us in the route prescribed. In this way eight or ten calls could be accomplished in the course of an afternoon. Not unfrequently the sympathy of our friend took a practical turn, and to one who was sick as well as poor, he would forward a *small joint* from his shop.

In addition to many hundreds of pastoral visits to members of society, in which we enjoyed the

invaluable assistance of this our unwearied fellow-labourer, we were not unfrequently comprehended, at his request, in the still more urgent cases of "them that (were) without." It is probable that no man, in the whole of M——, had so many calls on behalf of *dying sinners*; and it was his delight to fly to their bed sides, and endeavour with all his might, to "pluck" them "as brands out of the burning."

One of the most affecting cases of the kind, to which we were ever summoned, was that of a young man who had brought himself to the gates of death, by a brief, but reckless, career of dissipation. His name was S—— B——; and we had just closed the service at H—— School, one Thursday night, when our friend apprised us of the case; and, on account of its extreme urgency, we consented to accompany him without delay.

Never shall we forget the condition in which we found him. He was scarcely twenty-one; and his fine raven locks exhibited a striking contrast to the pale forehead over which they hung. He had ruptured a vessel, and the continuation of the fatal hemorrhage was proclaimed by *the blood* which appeared on the pillow, sheets, and counterpane.

About that time, *regattas*, or boat-races, had become a favorite amusement in M——; and it is difficult to characterise their evil tendencies as they

deserve. Rival clubs are formed, consisting principally of young men ; and their evenings are spent together, either on the water or in coffee-houses ; and, alas ! the rest of the Sabbath only returns to be prostituted upon the same objects, and to supply a stronger impetus to their downward career. The same profanity, intemperance, betting, gambling, &c. take place at these boat-races as at horse-races ; and whilst the latter are but an itinerant scourge, inflicted once a year upon a neighbourhood, the former are of frequent recurrence. *Cruelty to animals* is a prominent crime connected with the older of these pernicious amusements ; but the new abomination perpetrates, in the most direct and glaring manner, *cruelty to man* ! extorting by competition, by premiums, and, above all, by youthful pride, the most excessive and monstrous struggles for victory. We heard of one instance in which the rowers had pursued their exciting and unnatural sport until they were all exhausted, and had to be literally *lifted out of the boat* by the opportune aid of a few hands belonging to a small vessel, which happened to pass the scene of their distress.

Young B. unhappily entered one of these clubs, and, stimulated by his companions, was in the habit of exerting himself far beyond his natural strength. In addition to *boating*, he plunged into various kinds of dissipation, of which *dancing* was not the least

pernicious. It was on one of these occasions, when the former of these exhausting sports had been, with a suicidal recklessness, followed by the latter, that the fatal injury occurred, which has been already mentioned.

A few days only remained of a life thus desperately sacrificed at the shrine of youthful folly. We found him both dark and miserable in his soul, and dreadfully alarmed at the prospect of death.

Our first effort was to secure his attention to the heinousness of his sins, for which purpose we made use of "the law," pointing out the most notorious of his transgressions against its spirit and letter, and warning him to "flee from the wrath to come." An awakening portion of Scripture was read, and prayer offered up by each of his visitors. We had the satisfaction to find that our faithful appeals were cordially received, both by the young man, and his deeply distressed father. The latter occupied a respectable situation at the head of the Pavier's department, and was a man of good character. The young man had no mother living.

On the following day we repeated our call, and were again favoured with the company of our worthy fellow-labourer, Mr. G. We found the object of our anxiety in the same alarming state of body as on the previous evening, and repeated our instructions and admonitions with a fervour even greater than

before, knowing that "the time (was) short!" Happy should we have been to witness more of that "godly sorrow (which) worketh repentance to salvation;" (2 Cor. vii. 10.) but, for this "good and perfect gift," we could only reiterate our intercessions to "the Father of Lights."

A more deplorable object can scarcely be conceived than this victim of dissipation,—suddenly arrested in his career,—transfixed with agony and despair,—and literally *weltering in his blood!* It was a verification of Solomon's appalling description of the death-scene of the profligate:—"And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof: and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me! I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly." (Prov. v. 11, 14.)

Without the slightest hope of his recovery, and with but little satisfaction as to the progress, or even the commencement, of a work of grace in his heart, we again took our leave of him.

The next morning brought us a summons of a still more alarming character; and hastening to the spot, we found the fell disorder to have indeed made rapid strides during the night. Reason being still spared, and a vehement desire for salvation evinced, we proceeded at once to instruct the dying sinner in the

nature and object of justifying faith. Scripture truth, familiar illustration, earnest argument, and *touching facts*, were all brought to bear upon his understanding, conscience, and affections, with a view to make him acquainted with the plan of salvation, and to prompt him, *there and then !* to embrace it.

In the last of these modes of dealing with this momentous case, viz., that of *facts*, we related the following signal instance of the successful exercise of *naked faith* in the atonement. Three young men went out in a boat one Sabbath day ; and after enjoying themselves for some time, an accident occurred by which the boat was capsized, and they were all precipitated into the water. Two were able to swim, and, though not without great difficulty, reached the bank of the river. The other was no swimmer, and he sunk and rose several times without any hand being put forth to save him. On reaching the bottom for the last time, he saw before him the dreadful prospect not only of temporal but eternal, death ! “ What must (he) do to be saved ? ” He was *the son of a Wesleyan Minister !* and had been well instructed in those sacred truths, against which, alas ! he had been living in such open rebellion. At this tremendous crisis, the death of Christ was exhibited before the eye of his faith by the Holy Spirit ; and he was enabled to cast himself, with all his sins, upon it. No sooner did he thus embrace Christ by faith, than

he was made conscious of pardon, and could "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Another instant! and he was insensible! For twenty minutes he continued under the water; and on being taken out, means were instantly resorted to for his restoration. It was found to be a case of suspended animation; and shortly the efforts of his friends were rewarded by his returning consciousness. *He lived again!* but the question of greatest moment was,—What became of the peace which he experienced when submerged beneath the waves, and on the threshold of eternity? Blessed be God! he still retained it! and the faith which, by a desperate venture, he exercised *in an instant!* was followed by a gracious change of heart and life. At the time when we heard of the circumstance, he was a member of our society, and actively employed in the work of God.*

Poor S. B. listened to this narrative with indescribable avidity; and a ray of hope appeared to brighten his previously gloomy and pallid features.

More than once during this memorable visit did we "bow (our) knees" at the bed-side of this suffering, but now penitent, youth; and deep and fervent, were his responses. Unaccompanied as we were, on this occasion, by our former fellow-visitant, the whole of these protracted exercises devolved upon our single

* We give this thrilling fact on the authority of the late Rev. John Fordred, Wesleyan Minister. He was himself in possession of the name of the party, but withheld it from motives of delicacy.

instrumentality; and if ever we "travailed in birth until Jesus Christ was formed in" any soul, it was on behalf of this self-destroyed, but blood-redeemed, young man, during this last forenoon of his life!

Towards the close of the interview, we read and expounded the parable of the Prodigal Son; and while uttering those words,—“When he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him;” (Luke xv. 20.) we were much affected to observe the father of the poor prodigal before us, as though in fulfilment of the passage, with his arms around his dear son's neck, supporting his sinking head; at the same time pouring forth cries and tears to God on his behalf. Whilst this touching scene furnished a rich illustration of the paternal tenderness of the Almighty towards the returning sinner, we were able also to contrast the finite and the Infinite! the earthly and the Heavenly Father! the one anxious to help, but limited in ability,—the other, both willing and “able to save to the uttermost!”

Again and again, we strove to ascertain the effect of THE TRUTH upon the sufferer's own judgment and feelings; but it was little indeed that we could learn from his faltering lips. Would! that a thousand triflers with their day of grace, and spendthrifts of their time and health, could have witnessed the admonitory spectacle of this young man's last moments,

and have seen him racked with physical pain, and writhing under "a wounded spirit." It would surely have been a *sermon* never to be erased from their memories.

Our heart-rending task was concluded with *prayer*, in which there mingled with the voice of the Pastor that of the father and the attendants, and, above all, that of the dying youth. One promise was powerfully applied, and vehemently pleaded, viz. ; "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out !" (John vi. 37.)

On taking leave, the poor creature grasped our hand with a mixture of fright and affection. In another hour he was no more ! The messenger who came to report the event said that "*he died happy.*" It is certain that his last breath was prayer.

It is not every "lover of souls" who possesses the sound discretion which governed the zeal of our invaluable friend, Mr. G. In a note appended to the 80th page of this little work, we refer to a trying position in which we were once placed, through the non-concurrence of a sick female in a visit which had been urged by several of her neighbours.

It was in 1845 or 6, when the principles of Robert Owen were fearfully rife among the working classes in M——, that we were informed that a female, whom we afterwards found to have imbibed those principles, was dangerously ill. Not being directly

invited to the house, we paused for several days before adventuring a call ; and, perhaps, might have escaped the annoyance to which we were eventually subjected, had it not been for the representations of G. F., *one of our Leaders*, and an immediate neighbour and acquaintance of the afflicted party.

The case was described as one of uncommon perversity, with which several of our friends had in vain endeavoured to cope ; and we were *called in* on account of our office, experience, &c. Our *forward* friend made little of our objection to 'obtrude our services ; and as himself and several others were in the habit of visiting the woman daily, there was a danger of our non-compliance being attributed to *fear*.

G. F. offered to accompany us ; but we had a misgiving as to his discretion, which induced us to prefer going alone. We knocked at the door, which was opened by a young woman, and giving our name, were shown into the house. The sick woman was lying on a bed in a corner of the room which we first entered. She was by no means uncivil, but politely requested us to take a chair. After stating our sympathy with her under her bodily sufferings, and our sincere hope that she might be speedily relieved, we ventured an enquiry as to the state of her mind, and her prospects beyond the grave. Her reply evinced the usual coolness of the school of which she

had become a confirmed disciple. She professed to have no doubt whatever of her future safety. With all the respect due to an erring judgment, and with deep compassion for the poor woman's soul, we were proceeding to scrutinize the grounds of her confidence when, to our dismay, in walked G. F. and another ! The sight of these well-known parties appeared to arouse all that was evil in her nature, and she forthwith changed her tone entirely, and both ordered them to withdraw, and refused any further intercourse on the topic on which we had made so promising a commencement.

Apprehensive as we were that little, if any, good could be effected by prolonging the interview, we nevertheless felt that our proper work, as a Minister of the Gospel, had been as yet scarcely begun, and therefore desired to be furnished with a Bible. "A Bible !" exclaimed the woman ; "there is none in this house, and while I live, I'll take care there shall be none." Without waiting for any signal, G. F. ran for the obnoxious volume, and, in a trice, it lay open before us. As we commenced turning over the sacred pages the storm of opposition became still fiercer ; and when we began to read, the infuriated creature actually rose up in bed, and hurled against us the most coarse invectives, and vehement menaces, which it was possible for the human tongue to utter. Retreat would have now been a betrayal of our trust,

and as we had entered the house as a minister, and in part at least, been received in that character, we determined not to desist until our work was done. We, therefore, read on to the end of the portion selected, and then, falling down upon our knees, invoked the aid of that Holy Spirit, who alone has access to the heart, and "turneth it whithersoever He will." (Prov. xxi. 1.)

The appearance of the woman was now that of a demoniac; and we are not sure that she might not be really "possessed." She endeavoured to seize one of the fire-irons, which, providentially, was beyond her reach; and when unable to strike us, she literally foamed at the mouth, and sp—t at us! Little did we expect that we should have been thus called to share "the reproach of Christ," and

"Enjoy (his) glorious infamy!"

Notwithstanding the furious and almost deafening outcries which assailed our ears, we persevered in supplication for the precious soul of this poor, misguided disciple of a false and heartless system, of which her extreme bigotry and bitterness could be no recommendation. At length, either from exhaustion, or a rebuke given to "the enemy" in answer to prayer, she became composed; and by the time we had concluded the solemn, but trying, exercise, she had almost recovered her former civility. On

parting, we made an overture of our future services, *if desired*; but hearing no more of the case, we presume that the affliction might be mercifully removed. For our own part, we had endeavoured to fulfil that direction of an oft-refused, and maltreated, apostle :—"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God, peradventure, will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of THE TRUTH." (2 Tim. ii. 25.)

In addition to stated information in reference to all cases of sickness in the Society, which ought to be furnished at every Leaders' meeting, *in writing*; and the personal attendance of individual Leaders upon a Pastor in his visits to the flock generally; it is possible for a Leaders' meeting to be of essential service in this "labour of love," by supplying lists of the names and residences of the whole of the members, which *the Secretary of the Meeting* may classify in geographical order. Space should be left for the insertion of new names; and it should be a "standing order" for the List to be revised quarterly. From this source, profitable occupation may be found for the first Leaders' meeting in each quarter, which is too commonly regarded as of little importance, because, forsooth! "*there is so little money to pay over to the Stewards.*"

The compilation of these *directories* will, however, always be found tedious in large Societies; and it is

not at all uncommon for brethren, who have been the loudest in their complaints of the neglect of Pastoral Visitation, to be the last to lend their aid in facilitating the work. One conscientious Superintendent, of whom we heard the other day, was engaged for more than a year in his last circuit, in a fruitless attempt to obtain a complete List. Meantime, his colleagues were kept in suspense as well as himself; and the only result was increased dissatisfaction among the people, whose hopes of seeing their Pastors had been excited by the extensive *talk* which there had been upon the subject. "While the grass is growing, the steed is starving."

To remedy this evil, we cannot too strongly insist upon a division of labour. Instead of leaving the Directory to be prepared by one of the Ministers, and especially the Superintendent! who has "a thousand and one" things besides, of equal importance, to attend to, let it be the work of the officer before named. The more useful work legitimately attached to his office, the more will he value the appointment, and the richer will be the reward in his own soul. If long resident in the place, his local knowledge will be of the utmost advantage in this department of his labours; and no directory need take longer preparing than a single month, while the quarterly revision may be generally dispatched in a few minutes. Such a *vade mecum* * would be an invaluable heir-loom

* Travelling companion.

to an Itinerant Pastorate. But beware of suspending the practical part for any directory. Every Leaders' meeting will furnish one or more right-hearted brethren, whose local information, added to the requisite amount of leisure, will constitute them excellent associates for a Pastor in his movements among the people. All "great bodies move slowly;" and come what may of theory and system, only make sure of a ready mind, a light foot, and a discreet companion,—and the work, once attacked, shall be found like a field of corn, ripe for the sickle.

Next to the pleasures of actual visitation, are those of subsequent meditation upon the scenes witnessed, and the good accomplished. As an aid to this sweet converse with the past, we suggest (what we have long used), A RECORD OF THE CASES VISITED. The following form may be adopted with advantage :—

No.	NAME.	RESIDENCE.	DATE OF APPLICATION.	WHEN VISITED.	REMARKS.
1	Thos. Birch	Queen Street	Sept. 4.	Sept. 5.	Consumption
2	Mary Green	Canal Street	" 6.	" 7.	84 years old, happy in God!
3	Wm. Turner	New Street	"	"	Accident in a Coal pit.
4	Sarah Lees	Paradise St.	"	"	Administered the sacrament

Our references to the Pastoral *economy* of the Connexion would not be complete without the introduc-

tion of *Lovefeasts*, which, we premise, ought always, if possible, to be held by the regular pastors.

The plan of admitting persons not possessing tickets of membership, will, in many instances, admit of improvement. Instead of a mere word of advice dropped in a hurry, we have found it of essential service to announce from the pulpit that those only will receive notes of admission who are intending to join the Society. Besides requesting the attendance of as many of the Leaders as possible, we have taken care to secure the services of our friend *the Secretary*, and in a book prepared for the purpose, have desired him to insert distinct answers to the following queries: What is your name? Where do you reside? With whom do you purpose to meet? In case of a demur on the last of these points, the Leaders are there with their very natural desire to secure accessions to their respective classes; and by dint of persuasion, we have generally found an arrangement entered into on the spot, and the note has been given with the distinct understanding that the party would meet accordingly. When this part of the business is terminated, it is an easy task for the Secretary to write out a duplicate copy for each Leader concerned, showing him the name and residence of those parties who have engaged to meet in his or her class. Enquiry can be made, at the following Leader's meeting, as to the fulfilment of the pledges

given. We adopted this plan, with excellent effect, at a Lovefeast held during a great revival, last autumn, in this town.* Upwards of 180 notes were given on the above principle ! and we had the satisfaction to find that very few of the promises made were unredeemed.

Another point demanding, if we mistake not, the serious consideration of all who take an interest in the affairs of Wesleyan Methodism, is *the character of the speaking* at our Lovefeasts. Of late, we are convinced, there has been a great deterioration in this matter. Much time is lost altogether ; and it is questionable if, in some instances, still more be not worse than lost, in consequence of its being occupied by ignorant, *forward*, or very young, persons. The case is much aggravated by the total silence of nine in ten of the Leaders, Local Preachers, and others, both male and female, who are well qualified to speak to edification. The inconsistency of this state of things may be tested by a supposed transfer of *the speaking* at a Missionary, or Bible, meeting, or any other, whether spiritual or secular, from the best informed and most talented, to the most illiterate, vulgar, and indiscreet, persons present.

Not that we would exclude any class of our beloved people from "exercising" at these hallowed festivals. But so long as official characters steadily avoid taking

* Darlaston.

any part, *except the distribution of the bread and water*, the materièl of talent and experience, necessary to sustain these important meetings, must greatly suffer.

It should be seriously considered that there are many present, on these occasions, whose ideas of spiritual religion are very obscure, or whose impressions, relative to the "one thing needful," are exceedingly feeble, and inconstant; and these require to hear something from lips which they will respect, that, by the blessing of God, may convey instruction to their minds, and conviction to their consciences. Others are seriously seeking salvation, but as yet they are like the man in the gospel who saw "men as trees walking;" and a few clear, and earnest testimonies to "the truth as it is in Jesus," may be the means, in His blessed hands, of dissipating the remaining mist, and enabling them to see all things "clearly." Let, then, the "talents" so frequently "buried," when they might be most successfully employed, be brought into active requisition in these interesting and popular assemblies.

Personal narrative is always adapted to fix the attention, and by its originality and variety, to exhibit the truth under novel and striking phases. The objects of the stated ministry are thus materially assisted; living witnesses "set to (their) seal that God is true;" and whilst the benefit conferred upon others

is great, the happy instruments thereof shall not go unrewarded, but, in richer baptisms of the Spirit, shall realize the fulfilment of that auspicious promise, —“ Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.” (Psalm l. 23.)

Next to the *quality* of Lovefeast addresses, it is important to regulate *the quantity*. If we are not mistaken, the latter is generally increased, in the same degree as the former is wanting. By proscribing dreams, visions, and all kindred absurdities, and laying stress upon *present experience*, you may give a timely and effectual check to the flippancy of youth, and the tediousness of age. It is only needful to engage a considerable number of our pious people, (encouraged by their respective *leaders*,) to give free utterance to their views, and feelings, on the best of themes, to ensure a spiritual banquet of the highest order. Often have we had to exclaim on such occasions,—“ Master! it is good to be here!” And who shall say, that it is not in scenes of this description, that holy intelligences, from a more exalted sphere, invisibly mingle, in accordance with that profound saying of the apostle:—“ To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God?” (Eph. iii. 10.)

We have already transgressed the limits originally prescribed for this essay ; yet must claim another page or two in deference to the claims of the *Juvenile* portion of a Wesleyan Pastor's varied, and momentous, charge.

The department of *Sabbath Schools* is worthy of far more attention than *he* can possibly award, consistently with all other claims upon his time and strength. Owing to the number of evenings in every week absorbed by preaching appointments, it is next to impossible for him to take part in the stated management of these Institutions. To constitute the Committees, and occasionally to preside at the official meetings of Schools connected with the place of his residence, are almost all that can be done, in this way, with so limited a number of Pastors. Until there be "more labourers," the services of the Pastorate must, we fear, continue to be rendered chiefly in a *popular* sphere.

Besides the anniversary collections which result from the public advocacy of these delights of the age, *the frequent appearance of the Pastors in the Schools* may be pleaded for, as of the utmost service to the souls of the children.

At a very early period of our Itinerancy, we began to occupy this field of usefulness ; and it has been our happiness to see considerable fruit of our labours. In 1831 and 2 we were stationed in the B———p

circuit ; and in two schools in particular were favoured with much divine help in our addresses to the children. One one occasion, at L——, it was said that not less than twelve of the elder scholars were convinced of sin under one address ! all of whom immediately joined the Society. About this time, a blessed revival of religion took place among the young of that place ; and one class which had consisted of twelve or fourteen young persons, rose to the number of seventy ! and was subsequently divided into four ! The attendance of these young disciples at the means of grace was most regular and devout ; the account they gave of their conversion and experience, scriptural ; and their general conduct highly creditable to their profession. If we had any misgiving respecting them, it was because of their tender years. However, a test arose which we had not anticipated. Not fewer than *seven* ! of these lambs of the flock, were, in the course of a few months, removed by death ; and the testimonies which they were able to bear in their dying hours, (several of which we heard personally,) were of the most satisfactory character. They had no fear of death, and “rejoiced in hope of the glory of God.”

One Sabbath evening after preaching, we remember to have been called to see one of them. Her name was Hannah ——, and her parents kept a toll bar within a few yards of the Chapel. We found her

sitting on a chair, and supported by pillows. It was but too apparent that her days (perhaps her hours) were numbered. With an anxiety which embraced both her own eternal interests, and the character of that work of grace among the young, of which she might be justly regarded as a specimen, we enquired into the state of her mind, and shall never forget the sweet confidence with which she replied,—“ I know that if my earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” (2 Cor. v. 1.) It was enough ! her faith was firmly fixed upon her Saviour, and her hope blooming with immortality ! In the course of the following week she “ entered into rest.” There is no better religion than that which enables its possessor to live holy, and die triumphant. As the number of these happy deaths was so large, and each case was connected not only with the Sabbath School and Society, but also with family circles of various extent, and different characters, we deemed the occasion worthy of special notice from the pulpit, and delivered one funeral discourse for *the seven*,—selecting for our text that passage :—“ Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.” (Psalm viii. 2.) A short account of each was prepared. They were of both sexes, and their ages

varied from ten to seventeen. The audience was large, and deeply affected.

The above were "a kind of first fruits" of our unworthy labours in the *Juvenile department* of our sacred office, and exercised considerable influence upon our future dealings with childhood and youth. Our estimate of the power of divine grace, at an early period of life, was greatly raised, and we learned to carry an evangelizing spirit with us whenever we entered a Sabbath School, and attempted to address the children. Seldom have we been disappointed in the result, after due perseverance.

Among our memoranda of this period we find another *Incident*, which we think will be deemed equally illustrative of juvenile piety, and natural repartee. We have mentioned another Sabbath School in the B—— circuit, besides that of L——, in which we were favoured with an encouraging degree of success in our occasional visits and addresses. It was at N——, where (in our time) there was a lively and united Society, and a flourishing School. Scores of the elder children were brought under a gracious influence. Nor was the revival confined to the young, but (as is often the case) spread among their family connexions, and attracted considerable attention in the neighbourhood.

One of the most intelligent and promising of these youthful trophies of redeeming grace, was H——

P——, a girl of about 14 years of age. Standing one day at the door of her father's house, she was accosted by a man of well known infidel principles, and who hoped (like the enemies of Christ,) to "entangle (her) in (her) talk." He began by asking her in a taunting tone,—“Art thou one o' these that pretend to have their sins forgiven?” “Yes!” she replied, meekly, but confidently. “Why,” returned he, “there is no such thing to be enjoyed, and I can prove it from Scripture.” “Aye!” exclaimed the girl, with a degree of scorn, “can t'o? but wheerabouts?” “Oh!” said her assailant, “from John iii. 8: ‘The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.’ Now then,” insisted this son of Belial, “thou can no more know that thy sins are forgiven, than thou can tell where t' wind comes from.” The girl paused for a moment; and then, conscious of her experience of the blessing, she promptly retorted, “Nay! that's not the meaning. Suppose now I come and stand out here on a windy night;—I can't tell where t'wind comes from, nor where it's going to: But if I put my hand out, *I can feel it!* and so,” she persisted, “I can *feel* that my sins are forgiven.” The man was at once dumb-founded; and, turning upon his heel, left her to the quiet enjoyment of this

"Seal of her sins in Christ forgiven,
Earnest of love, and pledge of heaven."

But one more *Incident*, of *this* class, shall be obtruded upon the patience of the reader. We were riding one fine Sabbath morning to an appointment, when a boy, connected with one of the above-named Schools, met us. A pleasing smile overspread his countenance, and he evidently wished to make some communication. *Pulling up*, we assumed a listening attitude, when he thus proceeded: "Sir, th' last time you came to our school and 'livered a lector, *theer were four moore softened !*"

Happy utterance of a delightful, and all-important fact! May it tend to encourage some junior Pastor to adapt his message of truth, and mercy, to the susceptible region of childhood and youth, as unfolded in our Sabbath Schools! Both children and teachers will hail the appearance of the "ambassador of Christ;" and many hearts will "melt like wax before the fire."

Co-ordinate with Sabbath schools, and perhaps even more dependent upon Pastoral energy to originate, direct, and sustain them, are *Wesleyan Day Schools*.

Never were a religious community more united in any object than were the Wesleyans, in opposing the "Episcopalian" measure of education, brought into Parliament by Sir James Graham. Public meetings, the power of the press, and floods

of petitions, proclaimed the determination of the body not to allow the children of their families, and schools, to be spirited away from them, by a kind of Church and State Necromancy. It was, doubtless, the part *we* took which turned the scale, and caused the withdrawment of the Bill.

Nothing, however, could be farther from the thoughts of Wesleyan antagonists of this objectionable measure, than that the great cause of National Education should be allowed to slumber. For several years there had existed a Wesleyan Committee of Education, annually appointed by the Conference, and consisting of the most influential Ministers and Laymen of the Body. Their labours had been truly arduous, and extended alike to the foundation of Schools, and the preparation of Teachers. In 1839, the sum of £5,000 was appropriated from the Centenary Fund in aid of these objects. This was at least *three years* before the introduction of the celebrated Factories' Education Bill. In 1844, immediately after *our* successful opposition to the measure, the entire connexion was moved on the question by a series of aggregate meetings, at the chief of which the President of the Conference occupied the chair. Besides raising by subscription upwards of £20,000, it was recommended to the Conference, and eventually sanctioned and appointed, that one half of the Gene-

ral Chapel Relief Fund, raised by public collections and private subscriptions, should be henceforth appropriated to educational purposes. The name of the fund was now changed to "The United Chapel and Wesleyan Education Fund." But even beyond this rapid creation of monetary resources, may be estimated the moral impetus given by these meetings to the great cause of Scriptural Education throughout our Connexion. A period of seven years was appointed for the establishment of 700 Schools, with every hope of realizing that number ; and Thomas Farmer, Esq., " whose praise is in all our churches," in addition to his noble general subscription, promised to give a donation of £1. to every Wesleyan Day School formed within that period.

Nearly six of *the seven* years have now elapsed, and the total number of our Day Schools, according to the last report, was only 369 !

The Ministers of the Connexion are empowered, and enjoined, to take the lead in this great enterprise, in their respective circuits. The responsibility of an initiative, in this momentous matter, cannot be too highly estimated. We are anxious to see the day when every Circuit shall have its General and Local Committees of Education ; and we are convinced, that they can scarcely *meet at all*, without taking successful action.

It has been our happiness to take part in the formation of one Wesleyan Day School, in each of the circuits in which we have travelled since the commencement of this connexional movement. The first was at M——, in the S—— circuit, in 1846-7. There had been a school upon the Glasgow system; but, for want of adaptation in the master, it had fallen through, and the Treasurer was actually £50 in advance! Nothing remained but the gallery, maps, &c.; and many a sigh was heaved by the friends and parents of the children, as they gazed upon the wreck of their once flourishing establishment. Happily, the Treasurer was a man pledged to the cause; and, when almost any other would have declined further responsibility until the old debt was cancelled, he was one of the most forward to agree to another trial. A competent Master was obtained from the Parent Committee, and the school re-opened. *In six months* the ratio of its income was self-supporting!

A second equally successful effort was made, when on account of severe family affliction, we removed from the Northern coast, and obtained an appointment for twelve months to the S—— circuit. The circuit generally is agricultural, consisting of numerous small places scattered over a wide space of country. One of these is H——, where there is scarcely the appearance of a village, but a few farm houses, with here and there a group of cottages,

occupied by farm-labourers, or hand-loom weavers. To look at the neighbourhood, you would wonder where a congregation was to come from, that should fill the large Wesleyan Chapel, which stands at the head of one of the many lanes that diverge from the main road. Here, however, Methodism is "*established*" in the hearts of the people; and at the sound of the chapel-bell, they flock from every part of the neighbourhood, and form one of the finest rural congregations we ever beheld. We found a Day School upon the premises, but it was small, not exceeding thirty or forty children in the winter, and dwindling down to twenty in the summer. Still it shewed that our friends were awake to the importance of a religious education. The Master was a Local Preacher, and his salary was (in part) made up, (we believe) from the funds of the chapel.

About the time of our entering upon the circuit, the Clergyman of a neighbouring township, intent upon "church extension," commenced the erection of commodious schools, at a short distance from our Chapel. When the building was nearly complete, he began to canvass the Wesleyans! for subscriptions, representing the very superior education which would be given to those who might attend his schools: they would even "*learn the use of the Globes!*"

Irrespective of this Church movement, we should have urged our friends to have a regularly trained

Master; but *now* they felt they had no alternative. The young brother in charge of the present "apology" for a School, was perfectly willing to resign, and even offered himself as a candidate for the advantages of our connexional training school.

The expense of outfit, &c., was cheerfully met by collections and subscriptions, and in applying for a Master, a pledge was given for a minimum salary of £60. A most suitable supply was sent; and the institution was opened just in time to prevent that abduction of Wesleyan children to the Church Schools which was evidently meditated. In a short time, we succeeded in raising a large and flourishing Day School, "out of debt and danger." Meanwhile, the clergyman, unable, for want of funds, to secure a trained Master, was driven to a temporary and inefficient appointment; and when we left the neighbourhood, his handsome and spacious premises were all but deserted; and *the poor Dominie* whom he had brought from a great distance, was unable to support himself, and talked of abdicating a position in which he ought never to have been placed.

The last Wesleyan Day School in the formation of which we took a part was in the place of our present residence. The subject had long pressed upon the minds and *consciencs* of a few of the best friends of Methodism whom the place contained; and our worthy predecessor had done all in his power to promote the

undertaking. Our course was to form a Committee, *at once*, and with their valuable aid, to encounter every other needful preliminary. Excellent premises were at our service, free from rent-charge. The members of committee willingly came forward with donations of various amounts, and promised to repeat them annually, if required. We then engaged a first-rate Master, and proceeded to contract for a gallery, &c. The entire cost of the outfit was as follows :—

	£.	s.	d.
Gallery, Forms, and Desks -	37	8	6
Maps and Books - - -	13	12	0½
Wall for Playground - -	15	0	0
Stove - - - - -	8	1	0
Sundries - - - - -	2	16	0
Total	<u>£76</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>6½</u>

In addition to the donations abovenamed, a Tea Meeting was held, and the services of that distinguished advocate of all that is great and good—Dr. Melson, of Birmingham, obtained. The proceeds were considerable ; and the Doctor's eloquent statement yet more important, in commending our infant enterprise to the public favor. Public collections, also, were made to a liberal amount. We opened the school on Dec. 6, 1848, and soon witnessed a rush of scholars. The average attendance, has, from nearly the commencement, been 140. The weekly





charges are 4d. and 6d. After paying a salary of £80 to the Master, there has remained a considerable surplus, which has been, in part, employed in liquidating the cost of the outfit. The Institution has *long been free from debt*; and, owing to local liberality, and the excellent management of the Committee, there has been no necessity to appeal for the usual grant from the General Education Fund.

Every Day School formed in our Connexion will demand pastoral supervision and co-operation. Not only must the Minister preside at the monthly meetings of the Committee, but he must personally visit the Institution at least once a week, and give *religious instruction to the children*.

The Wesleyans of B——, in L——, had the honour of being very early engaged in the work of juvenile instruction on week-days. *At least ten years* before the Connexion generally was moved on the subject, they had a Boys', Girls', and Infants' establishment,—each separately conducted. Once a week the three schools were assembled in one room, and one of the Ministers held a religious service with them for about an hour. On one of these occasions, we requested as many of the children as might be disposed for the task, to learn by heart a chapter in the New Testament, so as to be able to repeat it at our ensuing visit. The chapter selected was the

third of St. John's Gospel. The time arrived, and a considerable number were brought forward who professed to have performed the task. We were on the point of commencing the exercise, when, looking round the room, we observed a little girl weeping. Enquiring into the cause of her distress, it appeared that she too had learnt the chapter, but had been accidentally overlooked by the teacher, and the disappointment had quite overcome her feelings. The inadvertence was quickly rectified, and the service proceeded.

The reader will remember the chapter; it commences with, "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus," &c., and contains that instructive and momentous portion relative to the new birth; (v. 3. 8.) and is, indeed, filled with the most weighty and hallowing truths. The children performed their alternate parts very satisfactorily; and some little familiar exposition of the chapter which had been repeated, together with the usual devotional exercises, filled up the allotted hour.

But a few weeks elapsed when, one Saturday evening, the teacher of the Girl's School called to say that one of the scholars was dangerously ill, and earnestly desirous of being visited. We accompanied her to the house, and found that it was the same little girl, whom we had detected *in tears*, on account of having been overlooked on the occasion already

described. She was about nine years of age ; and the complaint under which she was suffering was the fatal croup ! We found her incapable of speaking, yet sensible, and (what was most important) able, by her looks, and signs, to afford us the most pleasing assurance of her inward happiness. She had, indeed, been “taught of God ;” and the truths which she had been so anxious to repeat from the sacred page, had found an entrance into her tender heart. The fear of death was entirely destroyed, and she had a delightful confidence that her Saviour was about to take her to himself.

Deeply impressed with the dear child’s dying testimony, we gave out a verse. It was this:—

“There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign :
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.”

The teacher was the only one who could assist in singing, the rest being too deeply affected. We sang the two first lines together, but in commencing the third,—

“Infinite day excludes the night,”

we could detect another voice, or rather a *whisper*, essaying to accompany us. It proceeded from the pillow of the dying child, who had caught the strain, and though unable to articulate was at least breathing her triumphs under the grim gaze of “the last

enemy!" We concluded our verse, and then prostrated ourselves in prayer, and separated to meet no more on earth. Early the following morning she joined the enraptured throng before the throne!

At the ensuing Visitation of the Classes, we found in one book a new name written in pencil. It was that of a female; and our first enquiry related to her reasons for joining the Society. "You don't know me then!" she said. Admitting that we were at fault, she continued, "Don't you remember visiting my child?" We now recollected the name. It was *the mother of the little girl!* As well as her feelings would allow, she proceeded to say,—“When I saw that dear child die so happy, I was *taken* with a conviction that, unless I turned to the Lord, I should never meet her in heaven! and that (she added) is the reason that has brought me here to-night!” It may be imagined with what feelings we received this hopeful candidate for church membership, whose conversion, afterwards attested by her consistent deportment, resulted (under God) from the piety of her child, and might be regarded as a reflex blessing upon *the Wesleyan Day School*, in which that child had been so successfully taught “the way of salvation.”

It is from our Sabbath and Weekly Seminaries, that there have arisen, and shall arise, untold accessions to our churches; whose multitude, character

and influence, shall exemplify the beautiful image of the fresh, and fertile, "dew," poured forth from "the womb of the morning." (Psalm c. 3.) Matthew Henry in his comment on the passage, says,—“*The dew of thy youth*’ is a numerous, illustrious, hopeful show of young people flocking to Christ, which should be to the world as dew to the ground, to make it fruitful.”

To this consummation nothing promises to be (under God) more contributory, than that free, and frequent, *pastoral association*, which has been pleaded for in the last few pages of this work.



